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EXPRESS MAILING LABEL NO: EL327514461US

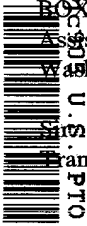
BOX PATENT APPLICATION
 Assistant Commissioner for Patents
 Washington, D.C. 20231

Date: August 11, 2000
 Atty Docket No: 102689-45/00-U0076

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 09/637800



08/11/00



Transmitted herewith for filing is the patent application of:

Inventor(s): **Darryl Black and Anne K. Winiewicz**
 Entitled: **PROCESSING NETWORK MANAGEMENT DATA IN ACCORDANCE WITH METADATA FILES**

Enclosed are:

- ☒ Patent application (including 172 sheets of Specification; 6 sheets of Claims (Claims #1 - 28); 1 sheet of Abstract; and 82 sheets of ☒ informal ☐ formal drawings (one set) (**FIGS. 1, 2a-2b, 3a-3m, 4a-4j, 5-8, 9a, 9b, 10, 11a, 11b, 12-15, 16a, 16b, 16c, 16d, 17-30, 31a, 31b, 31c, 32a, 32b, 32c, 33a, 33b, 33c, 33d, 34a, 34b, 35-40, 41a, 41b, 41c and 42-58**);
- ☒ Title Sheet for Patent Application;
- ☒ Declaration and Power of Attorney (☒ executed ☐ unexecuted);
- ☒ Verified Statement Claiming Small Entity Status;
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement (w/Form PTO-1449 and copies of referenced documents);
- ☒ Assignment (w/Recordation Cover Sheet) of the invention to Équipe Communications Corporation;
- ☒ Check in the amount of \$40.00 representing Assignment Recordal Fee;
- ☒ Check in the amount of \$417.00 representing filing fee based on
☐ large entity status ☒ small entity status;
- ☒ Bibliographic Data Sheet; and
- ☒ Postcard receipt.

CLAIMS FILED:	MINUS BASE:	EQUALS EXTRA CLAIMS:	RATE:	BASIC FEE \$ 690.00
Total: 28	20	8	x \$ 18.00	\$ 144.00
Independent: 3	3	0	x \$ 78.00	\$ 0.00
Multiple Dependent Claims (1st presentation)			\$260.00	\$ 0.00
SUBTOTAL FILING FEE				\$ 834.00
Small Entity filing, divide by 1/2 (Note: Verified Statement must be attached)				\$ 417.00
TOTAL FILING FEE				\$ 417.00

- ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any additional filing fees under \$1.16 associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 141449.

SUBMIT IN DUPLICATE

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Sheet 1 of 2

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT: Black, et al.

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO: 102689-45/00-U0076

APPLICATION NO: N/A

EXAMINER: Not Yet Assigned

FILED: Herewith

GROUP NO: Not Yet Assigned

ENTITLED: Processing Network Management Data in Accordance With Metadata Files

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

STATEMENT CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY STATUS

Sir:

THE UNDERSIGNED STATES:

Exclusive rights in the above-identified invention reside in the "small entity(ies)" defined and named below, and "small entity" fees are appropriate. Qualification as a small entity is based upon the statement(s) below:

SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN

The below-identified small business concern qualifies as a small business as defined in 13 C.F.R. § 121.3-18, and reproduced in 37 C.F.R. § 1.9(d), for purposes of paying reduced fees under Sections 41(a) and (b) of Title 35, in that the number of employees, including those of its affiliates, which does not exceed 500 persons, and it has not assigned, granted, conveyed or licensed, and is under no obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey or license, any rights in the invention to any person who could not be classified as an independent inventor if that person had made the invention, or to any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 37 C.F.R. § 1.9(d) or a nonprofit organization under 37 C.F.R. § 1.9(e).

Concerns are affiliates of each other when, either directly or indirectly, one concern controls or has the power to control the other, or a third party controls or has the power to control both. The number of employees of the business concern is the average over the fiscal year of the persons employed during each of the pay periods of the fiscal year. Employees are those persons employed on a full-time, part-time or temporary basis during the previous fiscal year of the concern.

The undersigned acknowledge(s) the duty to file, in this application or patent, notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying, or at the time of paying, the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small entity is no longer appropriate (37 C.F.R. § 11.28(b)).

The below-signing individual(s) hereby declare(s) that (he, she, they) are authorized to execute this statement on behalf of the small entity; that all statements made herein of (his, her, their) own knowledge are true and that

001120.00342960

Sheet 2 of 2

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all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application, any patent issue thereon, or any patent to which this verified statement is directed.

Name of Small Entity:

Equipe Communications Corporation

Address of Small Entity:

One Hundred Nagog Park, Acton, MA 01720


Name of Person Signing:

Patricia Davis

Title of Person Signing:

Corporate Counsel

Signature: (Please sign and date in permanent ink.)

X 

Date signed:

X 8/10/00

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Age	34.5	10.2	22	55
Gender	Male			
Female				
Marital status	Married			
Single				
Divorced				
Widowed				
Education	High school			
College				
Postgraduate				
Occupation	Manager			
Engineer				
Teacher				
Health status	Good			
Fair				
Poor				
Smoking status	Smoker			
Non-smoker				
Alcohol consumption	Regular			
Occasional				
Never				
Stress level	High			
Medium				
Low				
Depression score	15.2	5.8	5	30
Anxiety score	12.5	4.5	5	25
Life satisfaction	65.3	15.2	30	100
Quality of life	78.5	12.5	50	100
Health-related quality of life	82.1	10.5	60	100
Functional status	85.5	12.5	60	100
Physical functioning	88.5	10.5	60	100
Role functioning	85.5	12.5	60	100
Bodily pain	75.5	15.5	50	100
General health	78.5	12.5	50	100
Energy/fatigue	72.5	15.5	50	100
Social functioning	82.5	12.5	60	100
Emotional well-being	85.5	10.5	60	100
Health status	88.5	10.5	60	100
Quality of life	92.5	10.5	70	100
Health-related quality of life	95.5	10.5	70	100
Functional status	98.5	10.5	70	100
Physical functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Role functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Bodily pain	100.0	10.5	70	100
General health	100.0	10.5	70	100
Energy/fatigue	100.0	10.5	70	100
Social functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Emotional well-being	100.0	10.5	70	100
Health status	100.0	10.5	70	100
Quality of life	100.0	10.5	70	100
Health-related quality of life	100.0	10.5	70	100
Functional status	100.0	10.5	70	100
Physical functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Role functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Bodily pain	100.0	10.5	70	100
General health	100.0	10.5	70	100
Energy/fatigue	100.0	10.5	70	100
Social functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Emotional well-being	100.0	10.5	70	100
Health status	100.0	10.5	70	100
Quality of life	100.0	10.5	70	100
Health-related quality of life	100.0	10.5	70	100
Functional status	100.0	10.5	70	100
Physical functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Role functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Bodily pain	100.0	10.5	70	100
General health	100.0	10.5	70	100
Energy/fatigue	100.0	10.5	70	100
Social functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Emotional well-being	100.0	10.5	70	100
Health status	100.0	10.5	70	100
Quality of life	100.0	10.5	70	100
Health-related quality of life	100.0	10.5	70	100
Functional status	100.0	10.5	70	100
Physical functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Role functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Bodily pain	100.0	10.5	70	100
General health	100.0	10.5	70	100
Energy/fatigue	100.0	10.5	70	100
Social functioning	100.0	10.5	70	100
Emotional well-being	100.0	10.5	70	100
Health status	100.0	10.5	70	100
Quality of life	100.0	10.5	70	100
Health-related quality of life	1			

CORRESPONDENCE INFORMATION

APPLICATION INFORMATION

REPRESENTATIVE INFORMATION

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Representative Customer Number:: 21125
Registration Number One:: 38403
Registration Number Two:: 32675
Registration Number Three:: 43328
Registration Number Four:: 28711
Registration Number Five:: 30833
Registration Number Six:: 31359
Registration Number Seven:: 44238
Registration Number Eight:: 43810
Registration Number Nine:: 31868

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Registration Number Ten:: 45053
Registration Number Eleven:: 41277

CONTINUITY INFORMATION

This application is a:: CONTINUATION IN PART OF
> Application One:: Pending
Filing Date:: 08-07-2000

Source:: PrintEFS Version 1.0.1

007720.00222560

PROCESSING NETWORK MANAGEMENT DATA IN ACCORDANCE WITH METADATA FILES

Darryl Black

Anne K. Winiewicz

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Docket No. 102689-45/00-U0076

Date of Mailing: August 11, 2000

**PROCESSING NETWORK MANAGEMENT DATA
IN ACCORDANCE WITH METADATA FILES**

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Serial Number _____, filed August 7, 2000, entitled "Integrating Operations Support Services With Network Management Systems", still pending.

Background

Periodically accounting data needs to be taken off a network device (e.g., switch, router, hybrid switch-router) and moved to, for example, a workstation for processing and billing integration. Post-processing of the data is necessary to convert it from binary to ASCII, AMA/BAF or other formats. Typically two distributed carefully synchronized processes are used to move the data from the network device to the workstation. If either process becomes out-of-sync with the other (due to a number of factors including power outage, network outage, disk full), data loss is likely to ensue. Data loss may lead to many problems including inaccurate billing – that is, a network provider may be unable to fully bill their customers due to a loss of data showing actual network usage. Data loss may also lead to inaccurate network device performance calculations, which may make it difficult to determine whether quality of service guarantees and service level agreements have been met.

In addition, keeping two or more distributed processes operating in a networked environment is difficult and typically requires one or both processes to maintain the state of the other process. This can add undue burden to the network device. Moreover, network devices have limited storage capacity, and synchronization constraints may cause a network device to exceed its storage capacity leading to data loss and/or a network device crash.

management system may be a data collector server, network manager server, billing server or a variety of other types of servers and processes.

In yet another aspect, the present invention provides a telecommunications system including a network device including an internal management subsystem capable of generating a management data file and an external management system, where the internal management subsystem is capable of pushing the management data file and a metadata file to the external management system and the external management system is capable of processing data in the management data file in accordance with the metadata file.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig. 1 is a block diagram of a computer system with a distributed processing system;

Figs. 2a-2b are block and flow diagrams of a distributed network management system;

Fig. 3a is a block diagram of a logical system model;

Figs. 3b and 3d-3f are flow diagrams depicting a software build process using a logical system model;

Fig. 3c is a flow diagram illustrating a method for allowing applications to view data within a database;

Fig. 3g is a flow diagram depicting a configuration process;

Figs. 3h and 3j are flow diagrams depicting template driven network services provisioning processes;

Figs. 3i and 3k-3m are screen displays of an OSS client and various templates;

Figs. 4a-4j are block diagrams representing graphical user interfaces;

Figs. 5 and 8 are block and flow diagrams of a computer system incorporating a modular system architecture and illustrating a method for accomplishing hardware inventory and setup;

Figs. 6, 7, 10, 11a, 11b, 12, 13 and 14 are tables representing data in a configuration database;

Fig. 9a is a block and flow diagram of a computer system incorporating a modular system architecture and illustrating a method for configuring the computer system using a network management system;

Fig. 9b is a block and flow diagram of an accounting subsystem for pushing network device statistics to network management system software;

Fig. 15 is a block and flow diagram of a line card and a method for executing multiple instances of processes;

Figs. 16a-16b are flow diagrams illustrating a method for assigning logical names for inter-process communications;

Fig. 16c is a block and flow diagram of a computer system incorporating a modular system architecture and illustrating a method for using logical names for inter-process communications;

Fig. 16d is a chart representing a message format;

Figs. 17-19 are block and flow diagrams of a computer system incorporating a modular system architecture and illustrating methods for making configuration changes;

Fig. 20 is a block and flow diagram of a computer system incorporating a modular system architecture and illustrating a method for distributing logical model changes to users;

Fig. 21 is a block and flow diagram of a computer system incorporating a modular system architecture and illustrating a method for making a process upgrade;

Fig. 22 is a block diagram representing a revision numbering scheme;

Fig. 23 is a block and flow diagram of a computer system incorporating a modular system architecture and illustrating a method for making a device driver upgrade;

Fig. 24 is a block diagram representing processes within separate protected memory blocks;

Fig. 25 is a block and flow diagram of a line card and a method for accomplishing vertical fault isolation;

Fig. 26 is a block and flow diagram of a computer system incorporating a hierarchical and configurable fault management system and illustrating a method for accomplishing fault escalation.

Fig. 27 is a block diagram of an application having multiple sub-processes;

Fig. 28 is a block diagram of a hierarchical fault descriptor;

Fig. 53 is a block diagram of an extractor circuit;
Fig. 54 is a block diagram of an external local timing subsystem;
Fig. 55 is a block diagram of an external central timing subsystem;
Fig. 56 is a block diagram of a network device connected to test equipment through programmable physical layer test ports;
Fig. 57 is a block and flow diagram of a network device incorporating programmable physical layer test ports; and
Fig. 58 is a block diagram of a test path table.

Detailed Description

A modular software architecture solves some of the more common scenarios seen in existing architectures when software is upgraded or new features are deployed. Software modularity involves functionally dividing a software system into individual modules or processes, which are then designed and implemented independently. Inter-process communication (IPC) between the processes is carried out through message passing in accordance with well-defined application programming interfaces (APIs) generated from the same logical system model using the same code generation system. A database process is used to maintain a primary data repository within the computer system / network device, and APIs for the database process are also generated from the same logical system model and using the same code generation system ensuring that all the processes access the same data in the same way. Another database process is used to maintain a secondary data repository external to the computer system / network device; this database receives all of its data by exact database replication from the primary database.

A protected memory feature also helps enforce the separation of modules. Modules are compiled and linked as separate programs, and each program runs in its own protected memory space. In addition, each program is addressed with an abstract communication handle, or logical name. The logical name is location-independent; it can live on any card in the system. The logical name is resolved to a physical card/process during communication. If, for example, a backup process takes over for a failed primary

process, it assumes ownership of the logical name and registers its name to allow other processes to re-resolve the logical name to the new physical card/process. Once complete, the processes continue to communicate with the same logical name, unaware of the fact that a switchover just occurred.

Like certain existing architectures, the modular software architecture dynamically loads applications as needed. Beyond prior architectures, however, the modular software architecture removes significant application dependent data from the kernel and minimizes the link between software and hardware. Instead, under the modular software architecture, the applications themselves gather necessary information (i.e., metadata and instance data) from a variety of sources, for example, text files, JAVA class files and database views, which may be provided at run time or through the logical system model.

Metadata facilitates customization of the execution behavior of software processes without modifying the operating system software image. A modular software architecture makes writing applications – especially distributed applications – more difficult, but metadata provides seamless extensibility allowing new software processes to be added and existing software processes to be upgraded or downgraded while the operating system is running. In one embodiment, the kernel includes operating system software, standard system services software and modular system services software. Even portions of the kernel may be hot upgraded under certain circumstances. Examples of metadata include, customization text files used by software device drivers; JAVA class files that are dynamically instantiated using reflection; registration and deregistration protocols that enable the addition and deletion of software services without system disruption; and database view definitions that provide many varied views of the logical system model. Each of these and other examples are described below.

The embodiment described below includes a network computer system with a loosely coupled distributed processing system. It should be understood, however, that the computer system could also be a central processing system or a combination of distributed and central processing and either loosely or tightly coupled. In addition, the

computer system described below is a network switch for use in, for example, the Internet, wide area networks (WAN) or local area networks (LAN). It should be understood, however, that the modular software architecture can be implemented on any network device (including routers) or other types of computer systems and is not restricted to a network switch.

A distributed processing system is a collection of independent computers that appear to the user of the system as a single computer. Referring to Fig. 1, computer system 10 includes a centralized processor 12 with a control processor subsystem 14 that executes an instance of the kernel 20 including master control programs and server programs to actively control system operation by performing a major portion of the control functions (e.g., booting and system management) for the system. In addition, computer system 10 includes multiple line cards 16a-16n. Each line card includes a control processor subsystem 18a-18n, which runs an instance of the kernel 22a-22n including slave and client programs as well as line card specific software applications. Each control processor subsystem 14, 18a-18n operates in an autonomous fashion but the software presents computer system 10 to the user as a single computer.

Each control processor subsystem includes a processor integrated circuit (chip) 24, 26a-26n, for example, a Motorola 8260 or an Intel Pentium processor. The control processor subsystem also includes a memory subsystem 28, 30a-30n including a combination of non-volatile or persistent (e.g., PROM and flash memory) and volatile (e.g., SRAM and DRAM) memory components. Computer system 10 also includes an internal communication bus 32 connected to each processor 24, 26a-26n. In one embodiment, the communication bus is a switched Fast Ethernet providing 100Mb of dedicated bandwidth to each processor allowing the distributed processors to exchange control information at high frequencies. A backup or redundant Ethernet switch may also be connected to each board such that if the primary Ethernet switch fails, the boards can fail-over to the backup Ethernet switch.

In this example, Ethernet 32 provides an out-of-band control path, meaning that control information passes over Ethernet 32 but the network data being switched by computer system 10 passes to and from external network connections 31a-31xx over a separate data path 34. External network control data is passed from the line cards to the central processor over Ethernet 32. This external network control data is also assigned a high priority when passed over the Ethernet to ensure that it is not dropped during periods of heavy traffic on the Ethernet.

In addition, another bus 33 is provided for low level system service operations, including, for example, the detection of newly installed (or removed) hardware, reset and interrupt control and real time clock (RTC) synchronization across the system. In one embodiment, this is an Inter-IC communications (I²C) bus.

Alternatively, the control and data may be passed over one common path (in-band).

Network/Element Management System (NMS):

Exponential network growth combined with continuously changing network requirements dictates a need for well thought out network management solutions that can grow and adapt quickly. The present invention provides a massively scalable, highly reliable comprehensive network management system, intended to scale up (and down) to meet varied customer needs.

Within a telecommunications network, element management systems (EMSs) are designed to configure and manage a particular type of network device (e.g., switch, router, hybrid switch-router), and network management systems (NMSs) are used to configure and manage multiple heterogeneous and/or homogeneous network devices. Hereinafter, the term "NMS" will be used for both element and network management systems. To configure a network device, the network administrator uses the NMS to provision services. For example, the administrator may connect a cable to a port of a network device and then use the NMS to enable the port. If the network device supports multiple protocols and services, then the administrator uses the NMS to provision these

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[illegible][illegible]

available for other management task. Communication between the NMS client and server is done via Remote Method Invocation (RMI) over Transmission Control Protocol (TCP), a reliable protocol that ensures no data loss.

The NMS client and server relationship prevents the network administrator from directly accessing the network device. Since several network administrators may be managing the network, this mitigates errors that may result if two administrators attempt to configure the same network device at the same time.

The present invention also includes a configuration relational database 42 within each network device and an NMS relational database 61 external to the network device. The configuration database program may be executed by a centralized processor card or a processor on another card (e.g., 12, Fig. 1; 542, Fig. 35) within the network device, and the NMS database program may be executed by a processor within a separate computer system (e.g., 62, Fig. 9a). The NMS server stores data directly in the configuration database via JAVA Database Connectivity (JDBC) over TCP, and using JDBC over TCP, the configuration database, through active queries, automatically replicates any changes to NMS database 61. By using JDBC and a relational database, the NMS server is able to leverage database transactions, database views, database journaling and database backup technologies that help provide unprecedented system availability. Relational database technology also scales well as it has matured over many years. An active query is a mechanism that enables a client to post a blocked SQL query for asynchronous notification by the database when data changes are made after the blocked SQL query was made.

Similarly, any configuration changes made by the network administrator directly through console interface 852 are made to the configuration database and, through active queries, automatically replicated to the NMS database. Maintaining a primary or master repository of data within each network device ensures that the NMS and network device are always synchronized with respect to the state of the configuration. Replicating changes made to the primary database within the network device to any secondary data

repositories, for example, NMS database 61, ensures that all secondary data sources are quickly updated and remain in lockstep synchronization.

Instead of automatically replicating changes to the NMS database through active queries, only certain data, as configured by the network administrator, may be replicated. Similarly, instead of immediate replication, the network administrator may configure periodic replication. For example, data from the master embedded database (i.e., the configuration database) can be uploaded daily or hourly. In addition to the periodic, scheduled uploads, backup may be done anytime at the request of the network administrator.

Referring again to Fig. 2a, for increased availability, the network device may include a backup configuration database 42' maintained by a separate, backup centralized processor card (e.g., 12, Fig. 1; 543, Fig. 35). Any changes to configuration database 42 are replicated to backup configuration database 42'. If the primary centralized processor card experiences a failure or error, the backup centralized processor card may be switched over to become the primary processor and configuration database 42' may be used to keep the network device operational. In addition, any changes to configuration database 42 may be written immediately to flash persistent memory 853 which may also be located on the primary centralized processor card or on another card, and similarly, any changes to backup configuration database 42' may be written immediately to flash persistent memory 853' which may also be located on the backup centralized processor card or another card. These flash-based configuration files protect against loss of data during power failures. In the unlikely event that all copies of the database within the network device are unusable, the data stored in the NMS database may be downloaded to the network device.

Instead of having a single central processor card (e.g., 12, Fig. 1; 543, Fig. 35), the external control functions and the internal control functions may be separated onto different cards as described in U.S. Patent Application Serial Number ___, filed May 20, 2000 and entitled "Functional Separation of Internal and External Controls in Network

Devices”, which is hereby incorporated herein by reference. As shown in Fig. 41a, the chassis may support internal control (IC) processor cards 542a and 543a and external control (EC) processor cards 542b and 543b. In this embodiment, configuration database 42 may be maintained by a processor on internal control processor card 542a and configuration database 42’ may be maintained by a processor on internal control processor card 543a, and persistent memory 853 may be located on external control processor card 542b and-persistent memory 853’ may be located on external control processor card 543b. This increases inter-card communication but also provides increased fault tolerance.

The file transfer protocol (FTP) may provide an efficient, reliable transport out of the network device for data intensive operations. Bulk data applications include accounting, historical statistics and logging. An FTP push (to reduce polling) may be used to send accounting, historical statistics and logging data to a data collector server 857, which may be a UNIX server. The data collector server may then generate network device and/or network status reports 858a-858n in, for example, American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) format and store the data into a database or generate Automatic Message Accounting Format (AMA/BAF) outputs.

Selected data stored within NMS database 61 may also be replicated to one or more remote/central NMS databases 854a-854n, as described below. NMS servers may also access network device statistics and status information stored within the network device using SNMP (multiple versions) traps and standard Management Information Bases (MIBs and MIB-2). The NMS server augments SNMP traps by providing them over the conventional User Datagram Protocol (UDP) as well as over Transmission Control Protocol (TCP), which provides reliable traps. Each event is generated with a sequence number and logged by the data collector server in a system log database for in place context with system log data. These measures significantly improve the likelihood of responding to all events in a timely manner reducing the chance of service disruption.

The various NMS programs – clients, servers, NMS databases, data collector servers and remote NMS databases – are distributed programs and may be executed on the same computer or different computers. The computers may be within the same LAN or WAN or accessible through the Internet. Distribution and hierarchy are fundamental to making any software system scale to meet larger needs over time. Distribution reduces resource locality constraints and facilitates flexible deployment. Since day-to-day management is done in a distributed fashion, it makes sense that the management software should be distributed. Hierarchy provides natural boundaries of management responsibility and minimizes the number of entities that a management tool must be aware of. Both distribution and hierarchy are fundamental to any long-term management solution. The client server model allows for increased scalability as servers and clients may be added as the number of network managers increase and as the network grows.

The various NMS programs may be written in the JAVA programming language to enable the programs to run on both Windows/NT and UNIX platforms, such as Sun Solaris. In fact the code for both platforms may be the same allowing consistent graphical interfaces to be displayed to the network administrator. In addition to being native to JAVA, RMI is attractive as the RMI architecture includes (RMI) over Internet Inter-Orb Protocol (IIOP) which delivers Common Object Request Broker Architecture (CORBA) compliant distributed computing capabilities to JAVA. Like CORBA, RMI over IIOP uses IIOP as its communication protocol. IIOP eases legacy application and platform integration by allowing application components written in C++, SmallTalk, and other CORBA supported languages to communicate with components running on the JAVA platform. For “manage anywhere” purposes and web technology integration, the various NMS programs may also run within a web browser. In addition, the NMS programs may integrate with Hewlett Packard’s (HP’s) Network Node Manager (NNM™) to provide the convenience of a network map, event aggregation/filtering, and integration with other vendor’s networking. From HP NNM a context-sensitive launch into an NMS server may be executed.

The NMS server also keeps track of important statistics including average client/server response times and response times to each network device. By looking at these statistics over time, it is possible for network administrators to determine when it is time to grow the management system by adding another server. In addition, each NMS server gathers the name, IP address and status of other NMS servers in the telecommunication network, determines the number of NMS clients and network devices to which it is connected, tracks its own operation time, the number of transactions it has handled since initialization, determines the "top talkers" (i.e., network devices associated with high numbers of transactions with the server), and the number of communications errors it has experienced. These statistics help the network administrator tune the NMS to provide better overall management service.

NMS database 61 may be remote or local with respect to the network device(s) that it is managing. For example, the NMS database may be maintained on a computer system outside the domain of the network device (i.e., remote) and communications between the network device and the computer system may occur over a wide area network (WAN) or the Internet. Preferably, the NMS database is maintained on a computer system within the same domain as the network device (i.e., local) and communications between the network device and the computer system may occur over a local area network (LAN). This reduces network management traffic over a WAN or the Internet.

Many telecommunications networks include domains in various geographical locations, and network managers often need to see data combined from these different domains to determine how the overall network is performing. To assist with the management of wide spread networks and still minimize the network management traffic sent over WANs and the Internet, each domain may include an NMS database 61 and particular / selected data from each NMS database may be replicated (or "rolled up") to remote NMS databases 854a-854n that are in particular centralized locations. Referring to Fig. 2b, for example, a telecommunications network may include at least three LAN domains 855a-855c where each domain includes multiple network devices 540 and an NMS database 61. Domain 855a may be located in the Boston, Massachusetts area, domain 855b may

also generated from the same logical system model to ensure that the programs use the data in the same way. Each model within the logical system model contains metadata defining an object / entity, attributes for the object and the object's relationships with other objects. Upgrading / modifying an object is, therefore, much simpler than in current systems, since the relationship between objects, including both hardware and software, and attributes required for each object are clearly defined in one location. When changes are made, the logical system model clearly shows what other programs are affected and, therefore, may also need to be changed. Modeling the hardware and software provides a clean separation of function and form and enables sophisticated dynamic software modularity.

A code generation system uses the attributes and metadata within each model to generate the APIs for each program and ensure lockstep synchronization. The logical model and code generation system may also be used to create test code to test the network device programs and NMS programs. Use of the logical model and code generation system saves development, test and integration time and ensures that all relationships between programs are in lockstep synchronization. In addition, use of the logical model and code generation system facilitates hardware portability, seamless extensibility and unprecedented availability and modularity.

Referring to Fig. 3a, a logical system model 280 is created using the object modeling notation and a model generation tool, for example, Rational Rose 2000 Modeler Edition available from Rational Software Corporation in Lexington, Massachusetts. A managed device 282 represents the top level system connected to models representing both hardware 284 and data objects used by software applications 286. Hardware model 284 includes models representing specific pieces of hardware, for example, chassis 288, shelf 290, slot 292 and printed circuit board 294. The logical model is capable of showing containment, that is, typically, there are many shelves per chassis (1:N), many slots per shelf (1:N) and one board per slot (1:1). Shelf 290 is a parent class generalizing multiple shelf models, including various functional shelves 296a-296n as well as one or more system shelves, for example, for fans 298 and power 300. Board 294 is also a parent

class having multiple board models, including various functional boards without external physical ports 302a-302n (e.g., central processor 12, Fig. 1; 542-543, Fig. 35; and switch fabric cards, Fig. 35) and various functional boards 304a-304n (e.g., cross connection cards 562a-562b and forwarding cards 546a-546e, Fig. 35) that connect to boards 306 with external physical ports (e.g., universal port cards 554a-554h, Fig. 35). Hardware model 284 also includes an external physical port model 308. Port model 308 is coupled to one or more specific port models, for example, synchronous optical network (SONET) protocol port 310, and a physical service endpoint model 312.

Hardware model 284 includes models for all hardware that may be available on computer system 10 (Fig. 1) / network device 540 (Fig. 35) whether a particular computer system / network device uses all the available hardware or not. The model defines the metadata for the system whereas the presence of hardware in an actual network device is represented in instance data. All shelves and slots may not be populated. In addition, there may be multiple chassis. It should be understood that SONET port 310 is an example of one type of port that may be supported by computer system 10. A model is created for each type of port available on computer system 10, including, for example, Ethernet, Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM) or Digital Signal, Level 3 (DS3). The NMS (described below) uses the hardware model and instance data to display a graphical picture of computer system 10 / network device 540 to a user.

Service endpoint model 314 spans the software and hardware models within logical model 280. It is a parent class including a physical service endpoint model 312 and a logical service endpoint model 316. Since the links between the software model and hardware model are minimal, either may be changed (e.g., upgraded or modified) and easily integrated with the other. In addition, multiple models (e.g., 280) may be created for many different types of managed devices (e.g., 282). The software model may be the same or similar for each different type of managed device even if the hardware – and hardware models – corresponding to the different managed devices are very different. Similarly, the hardware model may be the same or similar for different managed devices

model to simultaneously support multiple versions of the same software processes (e.g., upgraded and older). In essence, the logical model insulates software applications from changes to the hardware models and vice-versa.

To further decouple software processes from the logical model – as well as the physical system – another layer of abstraction is added in the form of version-stamped views. A view is a logical slice of the logical model and defines a particular set of data within the logical model to which an associated process has access. Version stamped views allow multiple versions of the same process to be supported by the same logical model since each version-stamped view limits the data that a corresponding process “views” or has access to, to the data relevant to the version of that process. Similarly, views allow multiple different processes to use the same logical model.

Code Generation System:

Referring to Fig. 3b, logical model 280 is used as input to a code generation system 336. The code generation system creates a view identification (id) and an application programming interface (API) 338 for each process that requires configuration data. For example, a view id and an API may be created for each ATM application 339a-339n, each SONET application 340a-340n, each MPLS application 342a-342n and each IP application 341a-341n. In addition, a view id and API is also created for each device driver process, for example, device drivers 343a-343n, and for modular system services (MSS) 345a-345n (described below), for example, a Master Control Driver (MCD), a System Resiliency Manager (SRM), and a Software Management System (SMS). The code generation system provides data consistency across processes, centralized tuning and an abstraction of embedded configuration and NMS databases (described below) ensuring that changes to their database schema (i.e., configuration tables and relationships) do not affect existing processes.

The code generation system also creates a data definition language (DDL) file 344 including structured query language (SQL) commands used to construct the database schema, that is, the various tables and views within a configuration database 346, and a

Figure 1 displays 12 line graphs (a-l) showing the time course of various physiological and behavioral parameters during a 10-minute period. The parameters are: (a) HR (b/min), (b) BP (mmHg), (c) SV (ml), (d) SVI (ml/m²), (e) CO (l/min), (f) COI (l/min/m²), (g) VTI (cm), (h) VTII (cm), (i) VTI/BSA (cm/m²), (j) VTI/BSA (cm/m²), (k) VTI/BSA (cm/m²), and (l) VTI/BSA (cm/m²). Each graph shows a baseline period followed by a 10-minute intervention period. The y-axis for all graphs ranges from 0 to 100. The x-axis for all graphs ranges from 0 to 10 minutes. The graphs show a general trend of increase in most parameters during the intervention period.

of each particular network device to which they are connected. Also described below, the NMS servers use the persistent layer metadata as well as run time configuration data to generate SQL configuration commands for use by the configuration database.

Prior to shipping computer system 10 to customers, a software build process is initiated to establish the software architecture and processes. The code generation system is the first part of this process. Following the execution of the code generation system, each process when pulled into the build process links the associated view id and API into its image. For example, referring to Fig. 3d, to build a SONET application, source files, for example, a main application file 859a, a performance monitoring file 859b and an alarm monitoring file 859c, written in, for example, the C programming language (.c) are compiled into object code files (.o) 859a', 859b' and 859c'. Alternatively, the source files may be written in other programming languages, for example, JAVA (.java) or C++ (.cpp). The object files are then linked along with view ids and APIs from the code generation system corresponding to the SONET application, for example, SONET API 340a. The SONET API may be a library (.a) of many object files. Linking these files generates the SONET Application executable file (.exe) 860.

Referring to Fig. 3e, each of the executable files for use by the network device / computer system are then provided to a kit builder 861. For example, several SONET executable files (e.g., 860, 863), ATM executable files (e.g., 864a-864n), MPLS executable files (e.g., 865a-865n), MSS executable files 866a-866n and a DDL configuration database executable file 867 may be provided to kit builder 861. Alternatively, the DDL configuration database executable file may be executed and some data placed in the database prior to supplying the DDL file to the kit builder. The kit builder creates a computer system / network device installation kit 862 that is shipped to the customer with the computer system / network device or, later, alone after modifications and upgrades are made.

Referring to Fig. 3f, similarly, each of the executable files for the NMS is provided separately to the kit builder. For example, a DDL NMS database executable file 868, an

and uses that information with the JAVA interfaces to construct (step 876) a model of the network device. The server provides (step 877) this information to the client, which displays (step 878) a graphical user interface (GUI) to the administrator indicating the hardware and services available in the selected network device and the current configuration and currently provisioned services.

Referring to Fig. 4a, a GUI 895 may include a graphical depiction of components within a network device. For example, graphic 896 is shown displaying a front view of the components of network device 540 (Fig. 35). A back view and other views may also be shown. The views are used to provide management context; for example, to configure or view statistics about a particular port, the user would select the port from the view and use the left mouse button to bring up the appropriate action on the port. The GUI may also include a configuration / service status window 897 for displaying current configuration and service provisioning details, and a menu 898 for selecting various information to be displayed. The network administrator may configure the network device and provision services through the GUI as well as check logged statistical information.

Fault, Configuration, Accounting, Performance and Security (FCAPS) management are the five functional areas of network management as defined by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Fault management is for detecting and resolving network faults, configuration management is for configuring and upgrading the network, accounting management is for accounting and billing for network usage, performance management is for overseeing and tuning network performance, and security management is for ensuring network security. GUI 895 provides a status button 899a-899f for each of the five FCAPS. By clicking on one of the status buttons, a status window appears and displays the status associated with the selected FCAPS button to the network administrator. For example, if the network administrator clicks on the F status button 899a, a fault event summary window 900 (Fig. 4b) appears and displays the status of any faults.

Each FCAP button may be colored according to a hierarchical color code where, for example, green means normal operation, red indicates a serious error and yellow indicates a warning status. Today there are many NMSs that indicate faults through color coded icons or other graphics. However, current NMSs do not categorize the errors or warnings into the ISO five functional areas of network management – that is, FCAPS. The color-coding and order of the FCAPS buttons provide a “status bar code” allowing a network administrator to quickly determine the category of error or warning and quickly take action to address the error or warning.

As with current NMSs, a network administrator may actively monitor the FCAPS buttons by sitting in front of the computer screen displaying the GUI. Unfortunately, network administrators do not have time to actively monitor the status of each network device — passive monitoring is required. To assist passive monitoring, the FCAPS buttons may be enlarged or “stretched” to fill a large portion of the screen, as shown in Fig. 4c. The FCAPS buttons may be stretched in a variety of ways, for example, a stretch option in a pull down menu may be selected or a mouse may be used to drag and drop the borders of the FCAPS buttons. Stretching the FCAPS buttons allows a network administrator to view the status of each FCAP button from a distance of 40 feet or more. Once stretched, each of the five OSI management areas can be easily monitored at a distance by looking at the bar-encoded FCAPS strip. The “stretchy FCAPS” provide instant status recognition at a distance.

The network administrator may set the FCAPS buttons to represent a single network device or multiple network devices or all the network devices in a particular network. Alternatively, the network administrator may have the GUI display two or more FCAPS status bars each of which represents one or more network devices.

Although the FCAPS buttons have been described as a string of multiple stretched bars, many different types of graphics may be used to display FCAPS status. For example, different colors may be used to represent normal operation, warnings and errors, and additional colors may be added to represent particular warnings and/or errors. Instead of

a bar, each letter (e.g., F) may be stretched and color-coded. Instead of a solid color, each FCAPS button may repeatedly flash or strobe a color. For example, green FCAPS buttons may remain solid (i.e., not flashing) while red errors and yellow warnings are displayed as a flashing FCAPS button to quickly catch a network administrator's attention. As another example, green / normal operation FCAPS buttons may be a different size relative to yellow / warnings and red / errors FCAPS buttons. For example, an FCAPS button may be automatically enlarged if status changes from good operation to a warning status or an error status. In addition, the FCAPS buttons may be different sizes to allow the network administrator to distinguish between each FCAPS button from a further distance. For example, the buttons may have a graduated scale where the F button is the largest and each button is smaller down to the S button, which is the smallest. Alternatively, the F button may be the smallest while the S button is the largest, or the A button in the middle is the largest, the C and P buttons are smaller and the F and S buttons are smallest. Many variations are possible for quickly alerting a network administrator of the status of each functional area.

Referring again to Fig. 3g, through the GUI the user then makes (step 879) configuration selections, and the client passes (step 880) this run time / instance configuration data to the server. Persistent layer software within the server then uses this data to generate (step 881) SQL commands, which the server sends to the configuration database software executing on the network device. This is referred to as "persisting" the configuration change. The configuration database software then executes (step 882) the SQL commands to fill in or change the appropriate configuration tables. The configuration database software then sends (step 883) active query notices to appropriate applications executing within the network device to complete the administrator's configuration request. Active query notices may also be used to update the NMS database with the changes made to the configuration database.

Even a simple configuration request from a network administrator may require several changes to one or more tables. Under certain circumstances, all the changes may not be able to be completed. For example, the connection between the computer system

executing the NMS and the network device may go down or the NMS or the network device may crash in the middle of configuring the network device. Current network management systems make configuration changes in a central data repository and pass these changes to network devices using SNMP "sets". Since changes made through SNMP are committed immediately (i.e., written to the data repository), an uncompleted configuration (series of related "sets") will leave the network device in a partially configured state (e.g., "dangling" partial configuration records) that is different from the configuration state in the central data repository being used by the NMS. This may cause errors or a network device and/or network failure. To avoid this situation, the configuration database executes groups of SQL commands representing one configuration change as a relational database transaction, such that none of the changes are committed to the configuration database until all commands are successfully executed. The configuration database then notifies the server as to the success or failure of the configuration change. If the server receives a failure notification, then the server re-sends the SQL commands to re-start the configuration changes.

Profiles:

Profiles may be used by the NMS client to provide individual users (e.g., network managers and customers) with customized graphical user interfaces (GUIs) or views of their network and with defined management capabilities. For example, some network managers are only responsible for a certain set of devices in the network. Displaying all network devices makes their management tasks more difficult and may inadvertently provide them with management capabilities over network devices for which they are not responsible or authorized to perform. With respect to customers, profiles limit access to only those network devices in a particular customer's network. This is crucial to protecting the proprietary nature of each customer's network. Profiles also allow each network manager and customer to customize the GUI into a presentation format that is most efficient or easy for them to use. For example, even two users with access to the same network devices and having the same management capabilities may have different GUI customizations through their profiles. In addition, profiles may be used to provide other important information, for example, SNMP community strings to allow an NMS

server to communicate with a network device over SNMP, SNMP retry and timeout values, and which NMS servers to use, for example, primary and secondary servers may be identified.

A network administrator is typically someone who powers up a network device for the first time, installs necessary software on the new network device as well as installs any NMS software on an NMS computer system, and adds any additional hardware and/or software to a network device. The network administrator is also the person that attaches physical network cables to network device ports. The first time GUI 895 is displayed to a network administrator, an NMS client uses a profile including a set of default values. Referring again to Fig. 4a, the administrator may change the default values in his profile by selecting (e.g., clicking on) a profile selection 902 in a navigation tree / menu 898. This causes the NMS client to display a profiles tab 903 (Fig. 4d) on the screen. The profile tab displays any existing profiles 904. The first time the profile tab appears only the network administrator's profile is displayed as no other profiles yet exist.

To save a network manager's time, the profiles tab may also include a copy button 906. By selecting a profile 904 and clicking on the copy button, an existing profile is copied. The network manager may then change the parameters within the copied profile. This is helpful where two user profiles are to include the same or similar parameters.

To change the parameters in the network administrator's profile or any other existing profile, including a copied profile, the user clicks on one of the profiles 904. To add a new profile, the user clicks on an Add button 905. In either case, the NMS client displays a profile dialog box 907 (Fig. 4e) on the screen. Through the profile dialog box, a user's user name 908a, password 908b and confirmed password 908c may be added. The confirm password field is used to assure that the password was entered properly in the password field. The password and confirmed password may be encrypted strings used for user authentication. These fields will be displayed as asterisks on the screen. Once added, a user simply logs on to an NMS client with this user name and password and the NMS client displays the GUI in accordance with the other parameters of this profile.

be set to allow the user to add network device IP addresses to device list field 908g, and a number may be added to a timeout field 908k to specify a number of minutes after which a user will be automatically logged out due to inactivity. A zero in this field or no value in this field may be used to indicate unlimited activity, that is, the user will never be automatically logged out.

The profile may also be used to indicate which NMS servers the NMS client should communicate with. An IP address may be added to a primary server field 908l and a secondary server field 908m. If the primary server fails, the client will access the secondary server. A port number is added to primary server port field 908n and to secondary server port field 908o to indicate the particular ports that should be used for RMI connectivity to the primary and secondary NMS servers.

Additional fields may be added to the device list to provide more information. For example, a read field 908p may be used to indicate the SNMP community string to be used to allow the NMS server to communicate with the network device over SNMP. The SNMP connection may be used to retrieve statistical data from the network device. In addition, a read/write field 908q may be used to indicate an SNMP community string to allow the NMS server to configure the network device and/or provision services. The profile may also include a retry field 908r and a timeout field 908s to provide SNMP retry and timeout values. Many different fields may be provided in a profile.

Instead of providing all the parameters and fields in a single profile dialog box, they may be separated into a variety of a tabbed dialog boxes (Figs. 4f-4i). The tabbed dialog boxes may provide better scalability and flexibility for future needs.

In one embodiment, an administrator level user has both read and write access to the physical and logical objects of the NMS client. Thus, all screens and functionality are available to an administrator level user, and an administrator after physically attaching an

external network attachment to a particular network device port may then enable that port and provision SONET paths on that port. All screens are available to a provisioner level user, however, they do not have access to all functionality as they are limited to read-only access of physical objects. For example, a provisioner can see SONET ports available on a device and can provision SONET paths on a port, but the provisioner cannot enable/disable a SONET port. In other words, a provisioner's power begins at the start of logical objects (not physical objects), for example, SONET paths, ATM interfaces, virtual ATM interfaces, and PVCs, and continues through all the configuration aspects of any object or entity that can be stacked on top of either a SONET path or ATM interface. A customer level user has read-only access to logical entities and only those logical entities corresponding to their group name or listed in the device list field. A customer may or may not have access to Fault, Configuration, Accounting, and Security categories of FCAPS relative to their devices.

A customer may install an NMS client at a customer site or, preferably, the customer will use a web browser to access the NMS client. To use the web browser, a service provider gives the customer an IP address corresponding to the service provider's site. The customer supplies the IP address to their web browser and while at the service provider site, the customer logs in with their username and password. The NMS client then displays the customer level GUI corresponding to that username and password.

Referring to Fig. 4j, a user preference dialog box 909 may be used to customize the GUI into a presentation format that is most efficient or easy for a user to work with. For example, show flags may be used to add tool tips (flag 910a), add horizontal grid lines on tables (flag 910b), add vertical grid lines on tables (flag 910c) and add bookmarks / short cuts (e.g., create a short cut to a PVC dialog box). Look and feel flags may also be used to make the GUI appear as a JAVA GUI would appear (flag 911a) or as a native application, for example, Windows, Windows/NT or Motif, GUI would appear (flag 911b).

Power-Up:

Referring again to Fig. 1, on power-up, reset or reboot, the processor on each board (central processor and each line card) downloads and executes boot-strap code (i.e., minimal instances of the kernel software) and power-up diagnostic test code from its local memory subsystem. After passing the power-up tests, processor 24 on central processor 12 then downloads kernel software 20 from persistent storage 21 into non-persistent memory in memory subsystem 28. Kernel software 20 includes operating system (OS), system services (SS) and modular system services (MSS).

In one embodiment, the operating system software and system services software are the OSE operating system and system services from Enea OSE Systems, Inc. in Dallas, Texas. The OSE operating system is a pre-emptive multi-tasking operating system that provides a set of services that together support the development of distributed applications (i.e., dynamic loading). The OSE approach uses a layered architecture that builds a high level set of services around kernel primitives. The operating system, system services, and modular system services provide support for the creation and management of processes; inter-process communication (IPC) through a process-to-process messaging model; standard semaphore creation and manipulation services; the ability to locate and communicate with a process regardless of its location in the system; the ability to determine when another process has terminated; and the ability to locate the provider of a service by name.

These services support the construction of a distributed system wherein applications can be located by name and processes can use a single form of communication regardless of their location. By using these services, distributed applications may be designed to allow services to transparently move from one location to another such as during a fail over.

The OSE operating system and system services provide a single inter-process communications mechanism that allows processes to communicate regardless of their location in the system. OSE IPC differs from the traditional IPC model in that there are no explicit IPC queues to be managed by the application. Instead each process is assigned

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100	2101	2102	2103	2104	2105	2106	2107	2108	2109	2110	2111	2112	2113	2114	2115	2116	2117	2118	2119	2120	2121	2122	2123	2124	2125	2126	2127	2128	2129	2130	2131	2132	2133	2134	2135	2136	2137	2138	2139	2140	2141	2142	2143	2144	2145	2146	2147	2148	2149	2150	2151	2152	2153	2154	2155	2156	2157	2158	2159	2160	2161	2162	2163	2164	2165	2166	2167	2168	2169	2170	2171	2172	2173	2174	2175	2176	2177	2178	2179	2180	2181	2182	2183	2184	2185	2186	2187	2188	2189	2190	2191	2192	2193	2194	2195	2196	2197	2198	2199	2200	2201	2202	2203	2204	2205	2206	2207	2208	2209	2210	2211	2212	2213	2214	2215	2216	2217	2218	2219	2220	2221	2222	2223	2224	2225	2226	2227	2228	2229	2230	2231	2232	2233	2234	2235	2236	2237	2238	2239	2240	2241	2242	2243	2244	2245	2246	2247	2248	2249	2250	2251	2252	2253	2254	2255	2256	2257	2258	2259	2260	2261	2262	2263	2264	2265	2266	2267	2268	2269	2270	2271	2272	2273	2274	2275	2276	2277	2278	2279	2280	2281	2282	2283	2284	2285	2286	2287	2288	2289	2290	2291	2292	2293	2294	2295	2296	2297	2298	2299	2300	2301	2302	2303	2304	2305	2306	2307	2308	2309	2310	2311	2312	2313	2314	2315	2316	2317	2318	2319	2320	2321	2322	2323	2324	2325	2326	2327	2328	2329	2330	2331	2332	2333	2334	2335	2336	2337	2338	2339	2340	2341	2342	2343	2344	2345	2346	2347	2348	2349	2350	2351	2352	2353	2354	2355	2356	2357	2358	2359	2360	2361	2362	2363	2364	2365	2366	2367	2368	2369	2370	2371	2372	2373	2374	2375	2376	2377	2378	2379	2380	2381	2382	2383	2384	2385	2386	2387	2388	2389	2390	2391	2392	2393	2394	2395	2396	2397	2398	2399	2400	2401	2402	2403	2404	2405	2406	2407	2408	2409	2410	2411	2412	2413	2414	2415	2416	2417	2418	2419	2420	2421	2422	2423	2424	2425	2426	2427	2428	2429	2430	2431	2432	2433	2434	2435	2436	2437	2438	2439	2440	2441	2442	2
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Hardware Inventory and Set-Up:

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configuration database and NMS database are downloaded and upgraded (as described below) without re-booting the computer system.

Network Management System (NMS):

Referring to Fig. 9a, as described above, a user / network administrator of computer system 10 works with network management system (NMS) software 60 to configure computer system 10. In the embodiment described below, NMS 60 runs on a personal computer or workstation 62 and communicates with central processor 12 over Ethernet network 32 (out-of-band). Instead, the NMS may communicate with central processor 12 over data path 34 (Fig. 1, in-band). Alternatively (or in addition as a back-up communication port), a user may communicate with computer system 10 through a console interface / terminal (840, Fig. 2a) connected to a serial line 66 connecting to the data or control path using a command line interface (CLI) protocol. Instead, NMS 60 could run directly on computer system 10 provided computer system 10 has an input mechanism for the user.

During installation, an NMS database 61 is established on, for example, work-station 62 using a DDL executable file corresponding to the NMS database. The DDL file may be downloaded from persistent storage 21 in computer system 10 or supplied separately with other NMS programs as part of an NMS installation kit. The NMS database mirrors the configuration database through an active query feature (described below). In one embodiment, the NMS database is an Oracle database from Oracle Corporation in Boston, Massachusetts.

The NMS and central processor 12 pass control and data over Ethernet 32 using, for example, the Java Database Connectivity (JDBC) protocol. Use of the JDBC protocol allows the NMS to communicate with the configuration database in the same manner that it communicates with its own internal storage mechanisms, including the NMS database. Changes made to the configuration database are passed to the NMS database to ensure that both databases store the same data. This synchronization process is much more efficient, less error-prone and timely than older methods that require the NMS to

periodically poll the network device to determine whether configuration changes have been made. In these systems, NMS polling is unnecessary and wasteful if the configuration has not been changed. Additionally, if a configuration change is made through some other means, for example, a command line interface, and not through the NMS, the NMS will not be updated until the next poll, and if the network device crashes prior to the NMS poll, then the configuration change will be lost. In computer system 10, however, command line interface changes made to configuration database 42 are passed immediately to the NMS database through the active query feature ensuring that the NMS, through both the configuration database and NMS database, is immediately aware of any configuration changes.

Asynchronously Providing Network Device Management Data:

Typically, work-station 62 is coupled to many network computer systems, and NMS 60 is used to configure and manage each of these systems. In addition to configuring each system, the NMS also interprets management data gathered by each system relevant to each system's network accounting data, statistics, security and fault logging and presents this to the user. In current systems, two distributed carefully synchronized processes are used to move data from a network system/device to the NMS. The processes are synchronized with each other by having one or both processes maintain the state of the other process. To avoid the problems associated with using two synchronized processes, in the present invention, internal network device management subsystem processes are made asynchronous with external management processes. That is, neither the internal nor external processes maintain each other's state and all processes operate independently of the other processes. This also minimizes or prevents data loss (i.e., lossless system), which is especially important for revenue generating accounting systems.

In addition, instead of having the NMS interpret each network device's management data in the same fashion, flexibility is added by having each system send the NMS (e.g., data collector server 857, Fig. 2a) class files 410 including compiled source code indicating how its management data should be interpreted. Thus, the NMS effectively "learns" how to process (and perhaps display) management data from the network device via the class

The UDML also provides each device driver with a polling timer to cause each driver to periodically poll its hardware for statistical/accounting data. The UDML also causes each driver to put the binary data in a particular format and send this binary data to the UDS with one of the registered string names. For each poll, the UDS combines the data sent from each device driver with the same string name into a binary data file (e.g., binary data files 416a-416n) with that string name and stores the binary data file. The binary data file may be stored in, for example, a hard drive 421 located on internal control processor 542a. Preferably, the data is maintained in binary form to keep the data files smaller than translating it into other forms such as ASCII. It should be understood, however, that the UDS may translate the binary data into ASCII or any other format before storing it on hard drive 421.

Preferably, polls for different statistical data are scheduled at different times to load balance the amount of statistical traffic across the control plane. For example, each ATM driver polls and sends data to the UDS corresponding to PVC accounting statistics (i.e., Acct_PVC) at a first time, each ATM driver polls and sends data to the UDS corresponding to SPVC accounting statistics (i.e., Acct_SPVC) at a second time, and each ATM driver and each SONET driver polls and sends data to the UDS corresponding to other statistics at other different times.

For each binary data file, the UDS creates a data summary file (e.g., data summary files 414a-414n) and stores it in, for example, hard drive 421. The data summary file defines the binary file format, including the type based on the string name, the length, the number of records and the version number. The UDS does not need to understand the binary data sent to it by each of the device drivers. The UDS need only combine data corresponding to similar string names into the same file and create a summary file based on the string name and the amount of data in the binary data file. The version number is passed to the UDS by the device driver, and the UDS includes the version number in the data summary file.

As described, the data collector server is completely independent of and asynchronous with the FTP client, which is also independent and asynchronous of the UDS. The separation of the data collector server and FTP client avoids data loss due to process synchronization problems, since there is no synchronization, and reduces the burden on the network device by not requiring the network device to maintain synchronization between the processes. In addition, if the data collector server goes down or is busy for some time, the FTP client and UDS continue working and continue sending binary data files and data summary files to the file system. When the data collector server is again available, it simply accesses the data summary files and processes the binary files as described above. Thus, there is no data loss and the limited storage capacity within the network device is not strained by storing data until the data collector server is available. In addition, if the FTP client or UDS goes down, the data collector server may continue working.

An NMS server (e.g., NMS server 851a), which may or may not be executing on the same computer system 62 as the data collector server, may periodically retrieve the ASCII or AMA/BAF files from the file system. The files may represent accounting, statistics, security, logging and/or other types of data gathered from hardware within the network device. The NMS server may also access the corresponding class files from the file system to learn how the data should be presented to a user, for example, how a graphical user interface (GUI) should be displayed, what data and format to display, or perhaps which one of many GUIs should be used. The NMS server may use the data to, for example, monitor network device performance, including quality of service guarantees and service level agreements, as well as bill customers for network usage. Alternatively, a separate billing server 423a or statistics server 423b, which may or may not be executing on the same computer system 62 as the data collector server and/or the NMS server, may periodically retrieve the ASCII or AMA/BAF files from the file system in order to monitor network device performance, including quality of service guarantees and service level agreements, and/or bill customers for network usage. One or more of the data collector server, the NMS server, the billing server and the statistics server may be combined into one server. Moreover, management files created by the data collector

server may be combined with data from the configuration or NMS databases to generate billing records for each of the network provider's customers.

The data collector server may convert the ASCII or AMA/BAF files into other data formats, for example, Excel spread sheets, for use by the NMS server, billing server and/or statistics server. In addition, the application class file for each data type may be modified to go beyond conversion, including direct integration into a database or an OSS system. For example, many OSS systems use a Portal billing system available from Portal Software, Inc. in Cupertino, CA. The JAVA class file associated with a particular binary data file and data summary file may cause the data collector server to convert the binary data file into ASCII data and then issue a Portal API call to give the ASCII data directly to the Portal billing system. As a result, accounting, statistics, logging and/or security data may be directly integrated into any other process, including third party processes, through JAVA class files.

Through JAVA class files, new device drivers may be added to a network device without having to change UDS 412a or FTP client 412b and without having to re-boot the network device and without having to upgrade/modify external processes. For example, a new forwarding card (e.g., forwarding card 552a) may be added to an operating network device and this new forwarding card may support MPLS. An MPLS device driver 419, linked within the UDML, is downloaded to the network device as well as a corresponding class file (e.g., class file 410e). When the FTP client discovers the new class file in hard drive 421, it uses an FTP push to send it to file system 425. The FTP client does not need to understand the data within the class file it simply needs to push it to the file system. Just as with other device drivers, the UDML causes the MPLS driver to register appropriate string names with the UDS and poll and send data to the UDS with a registered string name. The UDS stores binary data files (e.g., binary data file 416e) and corresponding data summary files (e.g., data summary file 414e) in the hard drive without having to understand the data within the binary data file. The FTP client then pushes these files to the file system again without having to understand the data. When the data summary file is discovered by the data collector server, the data collector server

[illegible]

Configuration:

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The logical to physical card table provides the user with maximum flexibility in choosing a redundancy structure. In the same computer system, the user may provide full redundancy (1:1), partial redundancy (1:N), no redundancy or a combination of these redundancy structures. For example, a network manager (user) may have certain customers that are willing to pay more to ensure their network availability, and the user may provide a backup line card for each of that customer's primary line cards (1:1). Other customers may be willing to pay for some redundancy but not full redundancy, and the user may provide one backup line card for all of that customer's primary line cards (1:N). Still other customers may not need any redundancy, and the user will not provide any backup line cards for that customer's primary line cards. For no redundancy, the NMS would leave the backup PID field in the logical to physical table blank. Each of these customers may be serviced by separate computer systems or the same computer system. Redundancy is discussed in more detail below.

The NMS and MCD use the same numbering space for LIDs, PIDs and other assigned numbers to ensure that the numbers are different (no collisions).

The configuration database, for example, a Polyhedra relational database, supports an "active query" feature. Through the active query feature, other software applications can be notified of changes to configuration database records in which they are interested. The NMS database establishes an active query for all configuration database records to insure it is updated with all changes. The master SRM establishes an active query with configuration database 42 for LPCT 100 and LPPT 101. Consequently, when the NMS adds to or changes these tables, configuration database 42 sends a notification to the master SRM and includes the change. In this example, configuration database 42 notifies master SRM 36 that LID 30 has been assigned to PID 500 and 513 and LID 31 has been assigned to PID 501 and 513. The master SRM then uses card table 47 to determine the physical location of boards associated with new or changed LIDs and then tells the corresponding slave SRM of its assigned LID(s). In the continuing example, master SRM reads CT 47 to learn that PID 500 is line card 16a, PID 501 is line card 16b and

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

The service endpoint managers (SEMs) running on each board establish active queries with the configuration database for SET 76. Thus, when the NMS changes or adds to the service endpoint table (SET), the configuration database sends the service endpoint manager associated with the port PID in the SET a change notification including information on the change that was made. In the continuing example, configuration database 42 notifies SEM 96a that SET 76 has been changed and that SE 1 was assigned to port 44a (PID 1500). Configuration database 42 notifies SEM 96b that SE 2, 3, and 4 were assigned to port 44b (PID 1501), SEM 96c that SE 5 and 6 were assigned to port 44c (PID 1502) and SEM 96d that SE 7, 8, and 9 were assigned to port 44d (PID 1503). When a service endpoint is assigned to a port, the SEM associated with that port passes the assigned SE number to the port driver for that port using the port PID number associated with the SE number.

To load instances of software applications on the correct boards, the NMS creates software load records (SLR) 128a-128n in configuration database 42. The SLR includes the name 130 (Fig. 14) of a control shim executable file and an LID 132 for cards on which the application must be spawned. In the continuing example, NMS 60 creates SLR 128a including the executable name atm_cntrl.exe and card LID 30 (row 134). The configuration database detects LID 30 in SLR 128a and sends slave SRMs 37b (line card 16a) and 37o (line card 16n) a change notification including the name of the executable file (e.g., atm_cntrl.exe) to be loaded. The primary slave SRMs then download and execute a copy of atm_cntrl.exe 135 from memory 40 to spawn the ATM controllers (e.g., ATM controller 136 on line card 16a). Since slave SRM 37o is on backup line card 16n, it may or may not spawn an ATM controller in backup mode. Software backup is described in more detail below. Instead of downloading a copy of atm_cntrl.exe 135 from memory 40, a slave SRM may download it from another line card that already downloaded a copy from memory 40. There may be instances when downloading from a line card is quicker than downloading from central processor 12. Through software load records and the tables in configuration database 42, applications are downloaded and executed without the need for the system services, including the SRM, or any other software in the kernel to have information as to how the applications should be

configured. The control shims (e.g., atm_cntrl.exe 135) interpret the next layer of the application (e.g., ATM) configuration.

For each application that needs to be spawned, for example, an ATM application and a SONET application, the NMS creates an application group table. Referring to Fig. 12, ATM group table 108 indicates that four instances of ATM (i.e., group number 1, 2, 3, 4) – corresponding to four enabled ports 44a-44n -- are to be started on line card 16a (LID 30). If other instances of ATM are started on other line cards, they would also be listed in ATM group table 108 but associated with the appropriate line card LID. ATM group table 108 may also include additional information needed to execute ATM applications on each particular line card. (See description of software backup below.)

In the above example, one instance of ATM was started for each port on the line card. This provides resiliency and fault isolation should one instance of ATM fail or should one port suffer a failure. An even more resilient scheme would include multiple instances of ATM for each port. For example, one instance of ATM may be started for each path received by a port.

The application controllers on each board now need to know how many instances of the corresponding application they need to spawn. This information is in the application group table in the configuration database. Through the active query feature, the configuration database notifies the application controller of records associated with the board's LID from corresponding application group tables. In the continuing example, configuration database 42 sends ATM controller 136 records from ATM group table 108 that correspond to LID 30 (line card 16a). With these records, ATM controller 136 learns that there are four ATM groups associated with LID 30 meaning ATM must be instantiated four times on line card 16a. ATM controller 136 asks slave SRM 37b to download and execute four instances (ATM 110-113, Fig. 15) of atm.exe 138.

Once spawned, each instantiation of ATM 110-113 sends an active database query to search ATM interface table 114 for its corresponding group number and to retrieve

associated records. The data in the records indicates how many ATM interfaces each instantiation of ATM needs to spawn. Alternatively, a master ATM application (not shown) running on central processor 12 may perform active queries of the configuration database and pass information to each slave ATM application running on the various line cards regarding the number of ATM interfaces each slave ATM application needs to spawn.

Referring to Figs. 13 and 15, for each instance of ATM 110-113 there may be one or more ATM interfaces. To configure these ATM interfaces, the NMS creates an ATM interface table 114. There may be one ATM interface 115-122 per path / service endpoint or multiple virtual ATM interfaces 123-125 per path. This flexibility is left up to the user and NMS, and the ATM interface table allows the NMS to communicate this configuration information to each instance of each application running on the different line cards. For example, ATM interface table 114 indicates that for ATM group 1, service endpoint 1, there are three virtual ATM interfaces (ATM-IF 1-3) and for ATM group 2, there is one ATM interface for each service endpoint: ATM-IF 4 and SE 2; ATM-IF 5 and SE 3; and ATM-IF 6 and SE 4.

As shown above, all application dependent data resides in memory 40 and not in kernel software. Consequently, changes may be made to applications and configuration data in memory 40 to allow hot (while computer system 10 is running) upgrades of software and hardware and configuration changes. Although the above described power-up and configuration of computer system 10 is complex, it provides massive flexibility as described in more detail below.

multiple OSS clients may work with one or more NMS servers. Database view ids and APIs for the OSS client may be generated using the logical model and code generation system (Fig. 3b) to synchronize the integration interfaces between the OSS clients and the NMS servers.

Interactively, a network manager may have an OSS client execute many provisioning templates to complete many provisioning tasks. Instead, the network manager may order and sequence the execution of many provisioning templates within a batch template to non-interactively complete the many provisioning tasks and build custom services. In addition, execution commands followed by control template names may be included within batch templates to non-interactively cause an OSS client to establish connections with particular NMS servers and network devices. For example, a first control template may designate a network device to which the current OSS client and NMS server are not connected. Including an execution command followed by the first control template name in a batch template will cause the OSS client to issue calls to the NMS server to cause the NMS server to access the different network device. As another example, a second control template may designate an NMS server and a network device to which the OSS client is not currently connected. Including an execution command followed by the second control template name will cause the OSS client to set up connections to both the different NMS server and the different network device. Moreover, batch templates may include execution commands followed by provisioning template names after each execution command and control template to provision services within the network devices designated by the control templates. Through batch templates, therefore, multiple control templates and provisioning templates may be ordered and sequenced to provision services within multiple network devices in multiple networks controlled by multiple NMSs.

Calls issued by the OSS client to the NMS server may cause the NMS server to immediately provision services or delay provisioning services until a predetermined time, for example, a time when the network device is less likely to be busy. Templates may be written to apply to different types of network devices.

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Median	Q1	Q3	Mode	Skewness	Kurtosis	Shapiro-Wilk	Normality
Age	35.2	12.5	18	65	32	28	38	35	0.15	2.5	0.95	Normal
Gender	1.2	0.4	1	2	1	1	1	1	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Marital status	2.1	0.8	1	3	2	1	3	2	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Education	12.5	2.5	8	16	11	10	13	12	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Income	1500	500	500	3000	1200	800	1800	1000	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Occupation	1.5	0.5	1	2	1	1	1	1	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Health status	2.5	0.5	1	3	2	2	2	2	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Stress level	3.5	1.0	1	5	3	2	4	3	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Life satisfaction	4.5	0.8	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Work-life balance	3.0	0.5	2	4	3	2	3	3	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Family support	2.0	0.5	1	3	2	1	3	2	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Community support	1.5	0.5	1	2	1	1	1	1	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Healthcare access	2.5	0.5	1	3	2	2	2	2	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Financial stability	3.0	0.5	2	4	3	2	3	3	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Emotional well-being	4.0	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Physical well-being	4.5	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Social well-being	4.0	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Overall quality of life	4.0	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Median	Q1	Q3	Mode	Skewness	Kurtosis	Shapiro-Wilk	Normality
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Gender	1.2	0.4	1	2	1	1	1	1	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Marital status	2.1	0.8	1	3	2	1	3	2	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Education	12.5	2.5	8	16	11	10	13	12	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Income	1500	500	500	3000	1200	800	1800	1000	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Occupation	1.5	0.5	1	2	1	1	1	1	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Health status	2.5	0.5	1	3	2	2	2	2	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Stress level	3.5	1.0	1	5	3	2	4	3	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Life satisfaction	4.5	0.8	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Work-life balance	3.0	0.5	2	4	3	2	3	3	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Family support	2.0	0.5	1	3	2	1	3	2	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Community support	1.5	0.5	1	2	1	1	1	1	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Healthcare access	2.5	0.5	1	3	2	2	2	2	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Financial stability	3.0	0.5	2	4	3	2	3	3	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Emotional well-being	4.0	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Physical well-being	4.5	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Social well-being	4.0	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Overall quality of life	4.0	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Median	Q1	Q3	Mode	Skewness	Kurtosis	Shapiro-Wilk	Normality
Age	35.2	12.5	18	65	32	28	38	35	0.15	2.5	0.95	Normal
Gender	1.2	0.4	1	2	1	1	1	1	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Marital status	2.1	0.8	1	3	2	1	3	2	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Education	12.5	2.5	8	16	11	10	13	12	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Income	1500	500	500	3000	1200	800	1800	1000	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Occupation	1.5	0.5	1	2	1	1	1	1	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Health status	2.5	0.5	1	3	2	2	2	2	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Stress level	3.5	1.0	1	5	3	2	4	3	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Life satisfaction	4.5	0.8	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Work-life balance	3.0	0.5	2	4	3	2	3	3	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Family support	2.0	0.5	1	3	2	1	3	2	0.10	1.5	0.92	Normal
Community support	1.5	0.5	1	2	1	1	1	1	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Healthcare access	2.5	0.5	1	3	2	2	2	2	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Financial stability	3.0	0.5	2	4	3	2	3	3	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Emotional well-being	4.0	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Physical well-being	4.5	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Social well-being	4.0	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal
Overall quality of life	4.0	0.5	3	5	4	4	4	4	0.05	0.5	0.98	Normal

The status command 918 will cause the interactive interpreter to display a status of the current interactive interpreter session. For example, the interactive interpreter may display the name 919 of an NMS server to which the OSS client is currently connected (as shown in Fig. 3i, the OSS client is currently not connected to an NMS server) and the interactive interpreter may display the names 920 of available template types. The writeCurrent command followed by a template type and a new template name will cause the interactive interpreter to make a copy of the loaded template, including current parameter values, with the new template name. The writeTemplate command followed by a template type and a new template name, will cause the interactive interpreter to make a copy of the template with the new template name with placeholders values (i.e., <String>) that indicate the network manager needs to fill in the template with the required datatypes as parameter values. The network manager may then use the load command followed by the new template name to load the new template into the OSS client.

Referring to Fig. 3j, from the interactive interpreter prompt (e.g., Enetcli>), a network manager may interactively provision services on a network device. The network manager begins by typing an open command 921a followed by the IP address of an NMS server to cause the OSS client to open a connection 921b with that NMS server. The network manager may then issue a manage command 921c followed by the IP address of a particular network device to cause the OSS client to issue a call 921d to the NMS server to cause the NMS server to open a connection 921e with that network device.

The network manager may now provision services within that network device by typing in an execute command 921f followed by a template type. For example, the network manager may type “execute SPATH” at the Enetcli> prompt to cause the OSS client to execute the instructions 921g within the loaded SPATH template using the parameter values within the loaded SPATH template. Executing the instructions causes the OSS client to issue calls to the NMS server, and these calls cause the NMS server to complete the provisioning task 921h. For example, following an execute SPATH command, the

NMS server will set up a SONET path in the network device using the parameter values passed to the NMS server by the OSS client from the template.

At any time from the Enetcli> prompt, a network manager may change the parameter values within a template. Again, the network manager may use showCurrent followed by a template type to see the current parameter values within the loaded template or showTemplate to see the available parameters within the loaded template. The network manager may then use the set command followed by the template type, parameter name and new parameter value to change a parameter value within the loaded template. For example, after the network manager sets up a SONET path within the network device, the network manager may change one or more parameter values within the loaded SPATH template and re-execute the SPATH template to set up a different SONET path within the same network device.

Once a connection to a network device is open, the network manager may interactively execute any template any number of times to provision services within that network device. The network manager may also create new templates and execute those. The network manager may simply write a new template or use the writeCurrent or writeTemplate commands to copy an existing template into a new template name and then edit the instructions within the new template.

After provisioning services within a first network device, the network manager may open a connection with a second network device to provision services within that second network device. If the NMS server currently connected to the OSS client is capable of establishing a connection with the second network device, then the network manager may simply open a connection to the second network device. If the NMS server currently connected to the OSS client is not capable of establishing a connection with the second network device, then the network manager closes the connections with the NMS server and then opens connections with a second NMS server and the second network device. Thus, a network manager may easily manage / provision services within multiple network devices within multiple networks even if they are managed by different NMS

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

the OSS client to execute the loaded spvc1 template and set up a different SPVC.

Similarly, task6 924f includes “load SPVC spvc2” and task7 924e includes “execute SPVC” to cause the OSS client to execute the loaded spvc2 template and set up yet another different SPVC.

Alternatively, the batch template may include commands for altering an existing template such that multiple similar templates are not necessary. For example, the loaded BATCH template may include task50 924g “set SPATH PortID 3” to cause the OSS client to change the PortID parameter within the SPATH template to 3. The BATCH template then includes task51 924h “execute SPATH” 924g to cause the OSS client to execute the SPATH template including the new parameter value which sets up a different SONET path. A BATCH template may include many set commands to change parameter values followed by execute commands to provision multiple similar services within the same network device. For example, the BATCH template may further include task52 924i “set SPATH SlotID 2” followed by task53 924j “execute SPATH” to set up yet another different SONET path. Using this combination of set and execute commands eliminates the need to write, store and keep track of multiple similar templates.

Batch templates may also be used to non-interactively provision services within multiple different network devices by ordering and sequencing tasks including execute commands followed by control template types and then execute commands followed by provisioning template types. Referring to Fig. 3M, instead of non-interactively establishing connections with an NMS server and a network device using a control template, a batch template may be used. For example, the first task in a loaded BATCH template 925 may be task1 925a “execute CONTROL”. This will cause the OSS client to execute the loaded CONTROL template to establish connections with the NMS server and the network device designated within the loaded CONTROL template (e.g., localhost and 192.168.9.202). The BATCH template then includes provisioning tasks, for example, task2 925b includes “execute SPATH” to set up a SONET path, and task3 925c includes “set SPATH PortID 3” and task4 925d includes “execute SPATH” to set up a different

SONET path. Many additional provisioning tasks for this network device may be completed in this way.

The BATCH template may then have a task including a set command to modify one or more parameters within a control template to cause the OSS client to set up a connection with a different network device and perhaps a different NMS server. Where the network manager wishes to provision a network device capable of being connected to through the currently connected NMS server, for example, localhost, then the BATCH template need only have task61 925e including “set CONTROL System” followed by the IP address of the different network device, for example, 192.168.9.201. The BATCH template then has a task62 925f including “execute CONTROL”, which causes the OSS client to issue calls to the localhost NMS server to establish a connection with the different network device. The BATCH template may then have tasks including execute commands followed by provisioning templates, for example, task63 925g including “execute SPATH”, to provision services within the different network device.

If the network manager wishes to provision a network device coupled with another NMS server, then the BATCH template includes, for example, task108 925h including “close” to drop the connection between the OSS client and localhost NMS server. The BATCH template may then have, for example, task109 925i including “set CONTROL Server Server1” to change the server parameter within the loaded CONTROL template to Server1 and task110 925j including “set CONTROL System 192.168.8.200” to change the network device parameter within the loaded CONTROL template to the IP address of the new network device. The BATCH template may then have task111 925k including “execute CONTROL” to cause the OSS client to set up connections to the Server1 NMS server and to network device 192.168.8.200. The BATCH template may then include tasks with execute commands followed by provisioning template types to provision services within the network device, for example, task112 925L includes “execute SPATH”.

The templates and interactive interpreter / OSS client may be loaded and executed on a central OSS computer system(s) and used to provision services in one or more network devices in one or more network domains. A network administrator may install an OSS client at various locations and/or for “manage anywhere” purposes, web technology may be used to allow a network manager to download an OSS client program from a web accessible server onto a computer at any location. The network manager may then use the OSS client in the same manner as when it is loaded onto a central OSS computer system. Thus, the network manager may provision services from any computer at any location.

Provisioning templates may be written to apply to different types of network devices. The network administrator does not need to know details of the network device being provisioned as the parameters required and available for modification are listed in the various templates. Consequently, the templates allow for multifaceted integration of different network management systems (NMS) into existing OSS infrastructures.

Instead of using template executable files and an OSS client, network managers may prefer to use their standard OSS interface to provision services in various network devices. In one embodiment, therefore, a single OSS client application programming interface (API) and a library of compiled code may be linked directly into the OSS software. The library of compiled code is a subset of the compiled code used to create the OSS client, with built-in templates including provisioning, control, batch and other types of templates. The OSS software then uses the supported templates as documentation of the necessary parameters needed for each provisioning task and presents template streams (null terminated arrays of arguments that serialize the totality of arguments required to construct a supported template) via the single API for potential alteration through the OSS standard interface. Since the network managers are comfortable working with the OSS interface, provisioning services may be made more efficient and simple by directly linking the OSS client API and templates into the OSS software.

Typically, OSS software is written in C or C++ programming language. In one embodiment, the OSS client and templates are written in JAVA, and JAVA Native Interface (JNI) is used by the OSS software to access the JAVA OSS client API and templates.

Inter-Process Communication:

As described above, the operating system assigns a unique process identification number (proc_id) to each spawned process. Each process has a name, and each process knows the names of other processes with which it needs to communicate. The operating system keeps a list of process names and the assigned process identification numbers. Processes send messages to other processes using the assigned process identification numbers without regard to what board is executing each process (i.e., process location). Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) define the format and type of information included in the messages.

The modular software architecture configuration model requires a single software process to support multiple configurable objects. For example, as described above, an ATM application may support configurations requiring multiple ATM interfaces and thousands of permanent virtual connections per ATM interface. The number of processes and configurable objects in a modular software architecture can quickly grow especially in a distributed processing system. If the operating system assigns a new process for each configurable object, the operating system's capabilities may be quickly exceeded. For example, the operating system may be unable to assign a process for each ATM interface, each service endpoint, each permanent virtual circuit, etc.. In some instances, the process identification numbering scheme itself may not be large enough. Where protected memory is supported, the system may have insufficient memory to assign each process and configurable object a separate memory block. In addition, supporting a large number of independent processes may reduce the operating system's efficiency and slow the operation of the entire computer system.

One alternative is to assign a unique process identification number to only certain high level processes. Referring to Fig. 16a, for example, process identification numbers may only be assigned to each ATM process (e.g., ATMs 240, 241) and not to each ATM interface (e.g., ATM IFs 242-247) and process identification numbers may only be assigned to each port device driver (e.g., device drivers 248, 250, 252) and not to each service endpoint (e.g., SE 253-261). A disadvantage to this approach is that objects within one high level process will likely need to communicate with objects within other high level processes. For example, ATM interface 242 within ATM 240 may need to communicate with SE 253 within device driver 248. ATM IF 242 needs to know if SE 253 is active and perhaps certain other information about SE 253. Since SE 253 was not assigned a process identification number, however, neither ATM 240 nor ATM IF 242 knows if it exists. Similarly, ATM IF 242 knows it needs to communicate with SE 253 but does not know that device driver 248 controls SE 253.

One possible solution is to hard code the name of device driver 248 into ATM 240. ATM 240 then knows it must communicate with device driver 248 to learn about the existence of any service endpoints within device driver 248 that may be needed by ATM IF 242, 243 or 244. Unfortunately, this can lead to scalability issues. For instance, each instantiation of ATM (e.g., ATM 240, 241) needs to know the name of all device drivers (e.g., device drivers 248, 250, 252) and must query each device driver to locate each needed service endpoint. An ATM query to a device driver that does not include a necessary service endpoint is a waste of time and resources. In addition, each high level process must periodically poll other high level processes to determine whether objects within them are still active (i.e., not terminated) and whether new objects have been started. If the object status has not changed between polls, then the poll wasted resources. If the status did change, then communications have been stalled for the length of time between polls. In addition, if a new device driver is added (e.g., device driver 262), then ATM 240 and 241 cannot communicate with it or any of the service endpoints within it until they have been upgraded to include the new device driver's name.

Preferably, computer system 10 implements a name server process and a flexible naming procedure. The name server process allows high level processes to register information about the objects within them and to subscribe for information about the objects with which they need to communicate. The flexible naming procedure is used instead of hard coding names in processes. Each process, for example, applications and device drivers, use tables in the configuration database to derive the names of other configurable objects with which they need to communicate. For example, both an ATM application and a device driver process may use an assigned service endpoint number from the service endpoint table (SET) to derive the name of the service endpoint that is registered by the device driver and subscribed for by the ATM application. Since the service endpoint numbers are assigned by the NMS during configuration, stored in SET 76 and passed to local SEMs, they will not be changed if device drivers or applications are upgraded or restarted.

Referring to Fig. 16b, for example, when device drivers 248, 250 and 252 are started they each register with name server (NS) 264. Each device driver provides a name, a process identification number and the name of each of its service endpoints. Each device driver also updates the name server as service endpoints are started, terminated or restarted. Similarly, each instantiation of ATM 240, 241 subscribes with name server 264 and provides its name, process identification number and the name of each of the service endpoints in which it is interested. The name server then notifies ATM 240 and 241 as to the process identification of the device driver with which they should communicate to reach a desired service endpoint. The name server updates ATM 240 and 241 in accordance with updates from the device drivers. As a result, updates are provided only when necessary (i.e., no wasted resources), and the computer system is highly scalable. For example, if a new device driver 262 is started, it simply registers with name server 264, and name server 264 notifies either ATM 240 or 241 if a service endpoint in which they are interested is within the new device driver. The same is true if a new instantiation of ATM – perhaps an upgraded version -- is started or if either an ATM application or a device driver fails and is restarted.

Referring to Fig. 16c, when the SEM, for example, SEM 96a, notifies a device driver, for example, device driver (DD) 222, of its assigned SE number, DD 222 uses the SE number to generate a device driver name. In the continuing example from above, where the ATM over SONET protocol is to be delivered to port 44a and DD 222, the device driver name may be for example, atm.se1. DD 222 publishes this name to NS 220b along with the process identification assigned by the operating system and the name of its service endpoints.

Applications, for example, ATM 224, also use SE numbers to generate the names of device drivers with which they need to communicate and subscribe to NS 220b for those device driver names, for example, atm.se1. If the device driver has published its name and process identification with NS 220b, then NS 220b notifies ATM 224 of the process identification number associated with atm.se1 and the name of its service endpoints. ATM 224 can then use the process identification to communicate with DD 222 and, hence, any objects within DD 222. If device driver 222 is restarted or upgraded, SEM 96a will again notify DD 222 that its associated service endpoint is SE 1 which will cause DD 222 to generate the same name of atm.se1. DD 222 will then re-publish with NS 220b and include the newly assigned process identification number. NS 220b will provide the new process identification number to ATM 224 to allow the processes to continue to communicate. Similarly, if ATM 224 is restarted or upgraded, it will use the service endpoint numbers from ATM interface table 114 and, as a result, derive the same name of atm.se1 for DD 222. ATM 224 will then re-subscribe with NS 220b.

Computer system 10 includes a distributed name server (NS) application including a name server process 220a-220n on each board (central processor and line card). Each name server process handles the registration and subscription for the processes on its corresponding board. For distributed applications, after each application (e.g., ATM 224a-224n) registers with its local name server (e.g., 220b-220n), the name server registers the application with each of the other name servers. In this way, only distributed applications are registered / subscribed system wide which avoids wasting system resources by registering local processes system wide.

The operating system, through the use of assigned process identification numbers, allows for inter-process communication (IPC) regardless of the location of the processes within the computer system. The flexible naming process allows applications to use data in the configuration database to determine the names of other applications and configurable objects, thus, alleviating the need for hard coded process names. The name server notifies individual processes of the existence of the processes and objects with which they need to communicate and the process identification numbers needed for that communication. The termination, re-start or upgrade of an object or process is, therefore, transparent to other processes, with the exception of being notified of new process identification numbers. For example, due to a configuration change initiated by the user of the computer system, service endpoint 253 (Fig. 16b), may be terminated within device driver 248 and started instead within device driver 250. This movement of the location of object 253 is transparent to both ATM 240 and 241. Name server 264 simply notifies whichever processes have subscribed for SE 253 of the newly assigned process identification number corresponding to device driver 250.

The name server or a separate binding object manager (BOM) process may allow processes and configurable objects to pass additional information adding further flexibility to inter-process communications. For example, flexibility may be added to the application programming interfaces (APIs) used between processes. As discussed above, once a process is given a process identification number by the name server corresponding to an object with which it needs to communicate, the process can then send messages to the other process in accordance with a predefined application programming interface (API). Instead of having a predefined API, the API could have variables defined by data passed through the name server or BOM, and instead of having a single API, multiple APIs may be available and the selection of the API may be dependent upon information passed by the name server or BOM to the subscribed application.

Referring to Fig. 16d, a typical API will have a predefined message format 270 including, for example, a message type 272 and a value 274 of a fixed number of bits (e.g., 32).

Processes that use this API must use the predefined message format. If a process is upgraded, it will be forced to use the same message format or change the API / message format which would require that all processes that use this API also be similarly upgraded to use the new API. Instead, the message format can be made more flexible by passing information through the name server or BOM. For example, instead of having the value field 274 be a fixed number of bits, when an application registers a name and process identification number it may also register the number of bits it plans on using for the value field (or any other field). Perhaps a zero indicates a value field of 32 bits and a one indicates a value field of 64 bits. Thus, both processes know the message format but some flexibility has been added.

In addition to adding flexibility to the size of fields in a message format, flexibility may be added to the overall message format including the type of fields included in the message. When a process registers its name and process identification number, it may also register a version number indicating which API version should be used by other processes wishing to communicate with it. For example, device driver 250 (Fig. 16b) may register SE 258 with NS 264 and provide the name of SE 258, device driver 250's process identification number and a version number one, and device driver 252 may register SE 261 with NS 264 and provide the name of SE 261, device driver 252's process identification number and a version number (e.g., version number two). If ATM 240 has subscribed for either SE 258 or SE 261, then NS 264 notifies ATM 240 that SE 258 and SE 261 exist and provides the process identification numbers and version numbers. The version number tells ATM 240 what message format and information SE 258 and SE 261 expect. The different message formats for each version may be hard coded into ATM 240 or ATM 240 may access system memory or the configuration database for the message formats corresponding to service endpoint version one and version two. As a result, the same application may communicate with different versions of the same configurable object using a different API.

This also allows an application, for example, ATM, to be upgraded to support new configurable objects, for example, new ATM interfaces, while still being backward

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

changes are possible, and the modular software architecture allows them to be made while the computer system is running (hot changes). Configuration changes may be automatically copied to persistent storage as they are made so that if the computer system is shut down and rebooted, the memory and configuration database will reflect the last known state of the hardware.

To make a configuration change, the user informs the NMS (e.g., NMS client 850a, Fig. 2a) of the particular change, and similar to the process for initial configuration, the NMS (e.g., NMS server 851a, Fig. 2a) changes the appropriate tables in the configuration database (copied to the NMS database) to implement the change.

Referring to Fig. 17, in one example of a configuration change, the user notifies the NMS that an additional path will be carried by SONET fiber 70c connected to port 44c. A new service endpoint (SE) 164 and a new ATM interface 166 are needed to handle the new path. The NMS adds a new record (row 168, Fig. 10) to service endpoint table (SET) 76 to include service endpoint 10 corresponding to port physical identification number (PID) 1502 (port 44c). The NMS also adds a new record (row 170, Fig. 13) to ATM instance table 114 to include ATM interface (IF) 12 corresponding to ATM group 3 and SE 10. Configuration database 42 may automatically copy the changes made to SET 76 and ATM instance table 114 to persistent storage 21 such that if the computer system is shut down and rebooted, the changes to the configuration database will be maintained.

Configuration database 42 also notifies (through the active query process) SEM 96c that a new service endpoint (SE 10) was added to the SET corresponding to its port (PID 1502), and configuration database 42 also notifies ATM instantiation 112 that a new ATM interface (ATM-IF 166) was added to the ATM interface table corresponding to ATM group 3. ATM 112 establishes ATM interface 166 and SEM 96c notifies port driver 142 that it has been assigned SE10. A communication link is established through NS 220b. Device driver 142 generates a service endpoint name using the assigned SE number and publishes this name and its process identification number with NS 220b. ATM interface 166 generates the same service endpoint name and subscribes to NS 220b

for that service endpoint name. NS 220b provides ATM interface 166 with the process identification assigned to DD 142 allowing ATM interface 166 to communicate with device driver 142.

Certain board changes to computer system 10 are also configuration changes. After power-up and configuration, a user may plug another board into an empty computer system slot or remove an enabled board and replace it with a different board. In the case where applications and drivers for a line card added to computer system 10 are already loaded, the configuration change is similar to initial configuration. The additional line card may be identical to an already enabled line card, for example, line card 16a or if the additional line card requires different drivers (for different components) or different applications (e.g., IP), the different drivers and applications are already loaded because computer system 10 expects such cards to be inserted.

Referring to Fig. 18, while computer system 10 is running, when another line card 168 is inserted, master MCD 38 detects the insertion and communicates with a diagnostic program 170 being executed by the line card's processor 172 to learn the card's type and version number. MCD 38 uses the information it retrieves to update card table 47 and port table 49. MCD 38 then searches physical module description (PMD) file 48 in memory 40 for a record that matches the retrieved card type and version number and retrieves the name of the mission kernel image executable file (MKI.exe) that needs to be loaded on line card 168. Once determined, master MCD 38 passes the name of the MKI executable file to master SRM 36. SRM 36 downloads MKI executable file 174 from persistent storage 21 and passes it to a slave SRM 176 running on line card 168. The slave SRM executes the received MKI executable file.

Referring to Fig. 19, slave MCD 178 then searches PMD file 48 in memory 40 on central processor 12 for a match with its line card's type and version number to find the names of all the device driver executable files associated needed by its line card. Slave MCD 178 provides these names to slave SRM 176 which then downloads and executes the device driver executable files (DD.exe) 180 from memory 40.

When master MCD 38 updates card table 47, configuration database 42 updated NMS database 61 which sends NMS 60 (e.g., NMS Server 851a, Fig. 2a) a notification of the change including card type and version number, the slot number into which the card was inserted and the physical identification (PID) assigned to the card by the master MCD. The NMS is updated, assigns an LID and updates the logical to physical table and notifies the user of the new hardware. The user then tells the NMS how to configure the new hardware, and the NMS implements the configuration change as described above for initial configuration.

Logical Model Change:

Where applications and device drivers for a new line card are not already loaded and where changes or upgrades to already loaded applications and device drivers are needed, logical model 280 (Figs. 2a-3e) must be changed and new view ids and APIs, NMS JAVA interface files, persistent layer metadata files and new DDL files must be re-generated. Software model 286 is changed to include models of the new or upgraded software, and hardware model 284 is changed to include models of any new hardware. New logical model 280' is then used by code generation system 336 to re-generate view ids and APIs for each application, including any new applications, for example, ATM version two 360, or device drivers, for example, device driver 362, and to re-generate DDL files 344' and 348' including new SQL commands and data relevant to the new hardware and/or software. The new logical model is also used to generate new NMS JAVA interface files 347' and new persistent layer metadata files 349'. Each application, including any new applications or drivers, is then pulled into the build process and links in a corresponding view id and API. The new applications and/or device drivers, NMS JAVA interface files, new persistent layer metadata files and the new DDL files as well as any new hardware are then sent to the user of computer system 10.

New and upgraded applications and device drivers are being used by way of an example, and it should be understood that other processes, for example, modular system services

and new Mission Kernel Images (MKIs), may be changed or upgraded in the same fashion.

Referring to Fig. 20, the user instructs the NMS to download the new applications and/or device drivers, for example, ATM version two 360 and device driver 362, as well as the new DDL files, for example, DDL files 344' and 348', into memory on work station 62. The NMS uses new NMS database DDL file 348' to upgrade NMS database 61 into new NMS database 61'. Alternatively, a new NMS database may be created using DDL file 348' and both databases temporarily maintained.

For new applications and application upgrades, the NMS works with a software management system (SMS) service to implement the change while the computer system is running (hot upgrades or additions). The SMS is one of the modular system services, and like the MCD and the SRM, the SMS is a distributed application. Referring to Fig. 20, a master SMS 184 is executed by central processor 12 while slave SMSs 186a-186n are executed on each board.

The NMS then writes a new record into SMS table 192 indicating the scope of the configuration update. The scope of an upgrade may be indicated in a variety of ways. In one embodiment, the SMS table includes a field for the name of the application to be changed and other fields indicating the changes to be made. In another embodiment, the SMS table includes a revision number field 194 (Fig. 21) through which the NMS can indicate the scope of the change. Referring to Fig. 21, the right most position in the revision number may indicate, for example, the simplest configuration update (e.g., a bug fix), in this case, termed a "service update level" 196. Any software revisions that differ by only the service update level can be directly applied without making changes in the configuration database or API changes between the new and current revision. The next position may indicate a slightly more complex update, in this case, termed a "subsystem compatibility level" 198. These changes include changes to the configuration database and/or an API. The next position may indicate a "minor revision level" 200 update indicating more comprehensive changes in both the configuration database and one or more APIs. The last position may indicate a "major revision level" 202 update indicative of wholesale changes in multiple areas and may require a reboot of the computer system to implement. For a major revision level change, the NMS will download a complete image including a kernel image.

During initial configuration, the SMS establishes an active query on SMS table 192. Consequently, when the NMS changes the SMS table, the configuration database sends a notification to master SMS 184 including the change. In some instances, the change to an application may require changes to configuration database 42. The SMS determines the need for configuration conversion based on the scope of the release or update. If the configuration database needs to be changed, then the software, for example, ATM version two 360, provided by the user and downloaded by the NMS also includes a configuration control executable file, for example, ATMv2_cnfig_cntrl.exe 191, and the name of this file will be in the SMS table record. The master SMS then directs slave SRM 37a on central processor 12 to execute the configuration control file which uses DDL file 344' to upgrade old configuration database 42 into new configuration database

42' by creating new tables, for example, ATM group table 108' and ATM interface table 114'.

Existing processes using their view ids and APIs to access new configuration database 42' in the same manner as they accessed old configuration database 42. However, when new processes (e.g., ATM version two 360 and device driver 362) access new configuration database 42', their view ids and APIs allow them to access new tables and data within new configuration database 42'.

The master SMS also reads ATM group table 108' to determine that instances of ATM are being executed on line cards 16a-16n. In order to upgrade a distributed application, in this instance, ATM, the Master SMS will use a lock step procedure. Master SMS 184 tells each slave SMS 186b-186n to stall the current versions of ATM. When each slave responds, Master SMS 184 then tells slave SMSs 186b-186n to download and execute ATMv2_cntrl.exe 190 from memory 40. Upon instructions from the slave SMSs, slave SRMs 37b-37n download and execute copies of ATMv2_cntrl.exe 204a-204n. The slave SMSs also pass data to the ATMv2cntrl.exe file through the SRM. The data instructs the control shim to start in upgrade mode and passes required configuration information. The upgraded ATMv2 controllers 204a-204n then use ATM group table 108' and ATM interface table 114' as described above to implement ATMv2 206a-206n on each of the line cards. In this example, each ATM controller is shown implementing one instance of ATM on each line card, but as explained below, the ATM controller may implement multiple instances of ATM on each line card.

As part of the upgrade mode, the updated versions of ATMv2 206a-206n retrieve active state from the current versions of ATM 188a-188n. The retrieval of active state can be accomplished in the same manner that a redundant or backup instantiation of ATM retrieves active state from the primary instantiation of ATM. When the upgraded instances of ATMv2 are executing and updated with active state, the ATMv2 controllers notify the slave SMSs 186b-186n on their board and each slave SMS 186b-186n notifies master SMS 184. When all boards have notified the master SMS, the master SMS tells

can be made to backup configuration database 420 instead of to configuration database 42.

The upgrade is begun as discussed above with the NMS downloading ATM version two 360 – including ATMv2.exe 189, ATMv2_cntrl.exe and ATMv2_cnfg_cntrl.exe – and DDL file 344' to memory on central processor 12. Simultaneously, because central processor 13 is in backup mode, the application and DDL file are also copied to memory on central processor 13. The NMS also creates a software load record in SMS table 192, 192' indicating the upgrade. In this embodiment, when the SMS determines that the scope of the upgrade requires an upgrade to the configuration database, the master SMS instructs slave SMS 186e on central processor 13 to perform the upgrade. Slave SMS 186e works with slave SRM 37e to cause backup processor 13 to change from backup mode to upgrade mode.

In upgrade mode, backup processor 13 stops replicating the active state of central processor 12. Any changes made to new configuration database 420 are copied to new NMS database 61'. Slave SMS 186e then directs slave SRM 37e to execute the configuration control file which uses DDL file 344' to upgrade configuration database 420.

Once configuration database 420 is upgraded, a fail-over or switch-over from central processor 12 to backup central processor 13 is initiated. Central processor 13 then begins acting as the primary central processor and applications running on central processor 13 and other boards throughout computer system 10 begin using upgraded configuration database 420.

Central processor 12 may not become the backup central processor right away. Instead, central processor 12 with its older copy of configuration database 42 stays dormant in case an automatic downgrade is necessary (described below). If the upgrade goes smoothly and is committed (described below), then central processor 12 will begin

operating in backup mode and replace old configuration database 42 with new configuration database 420.

Device Driver Upgrade:

Device driver software may also be upgraded and the implementation of device driver upgrades is similar to the implementation of application upgrades. The user informs the NMS of the device driver change and provides a copy of the new software (e.g., DD[^].exe 362, Figs. 20 and 23). The NMS downloads the new device driver to memory 40 on central processor 12, and the NMS writes a new record in SMS table 192 indicating the device driver upgrade. Configuration database 42 sends a notification to master SMS 184 including the name of the driver to be upgraded. To determine where the original device driver is currently running in computer system 10, the master SMS searches PMD file 48 for a match of the device driver name (existing device driver, not upgraded device driver) to learn with which module type and version number the device driver is associated. The device driver may be running on one or more boards in computer system 10. As described above, the PMD file corresponds the module type and version number of a board with the mission kernel image for that board as well as the device drivers for that board. The SMS then searches card table 47 for a match with the module type and version number found in the PMD file. Card table 47 includes records corresponding module type and version number with the physical identification (PID) and slot number of that board. The master SMS now knows the board or boards within computer system 10 on which to load the upgraded device driver. If the device driver is for a particular port, then the SMS must also search the port table to learn the PID for that port.

The master SMS notifies each slave SMS running on boards to be upgraded of the name of the device driver executable file to download and execute. In the example, master SMS 184 sends slave SMS 186f the name of the upgraded device driver (DD[^].exe 362) to download. Slave SMS 186f tells slave SRM to download and execute DD[^].exe 362 in upgrade mode. Once downloaded, DD[^].exe 363 (copy of DD[^].exe 362) gathers active state information from the currently running DD.exe 212 in a similar fashion as a redundant or backup device driver would gather active state. DD[^].exe 362 then notifies

slave SRM 37f that active state has been gathered, and slave SRM 37f stops the current DD.exe 212 process and transitions the upgraded DD^.exe 362 process to the primary role.

Automatic Downgrade:

Often, implementation of an upgrade, can cause unexpected errors in the upgraded software, in other applications or in hardware. As described above, a new configuration database 42' (Fig. 20) is generated and changes to the new configuration database are made in new tables (e.g., ATM interface table 114' and ATM group table 108', Fig. 20) and new executable files (e.g., ATMv2.exe 189, ATMv2_cntrl.exe 190 and ATMv2_cnfg_cntrl.exe 191) are downloaded to memory 40. Importantly, the old configuration database records and the original application files are not deleted or altered. In the embodiment where changes are made directly to configuration database 42 on central processor 12, they are made only in non-persistent memory until committed (described below). In the embodiment where changes are made to backup configuration database 420 on backup central processor 13, original configuration database 42 remains unchanged.

Because the operating system provides a protected memory model that assigns different process blocks to different processes, including upgraded applications, the original applications will not share memory space with the upgraded applications and, therefore, cannot corrupt or change the memory used by the original application. Similarly, memory 40 is capable of simultaneously maintaining the original and upgraded versions of the configuration database records and executable files as well as the original and upgraded versions of the applications (e.g., ATM 188a-188n). As a result, the SMS is capable of an automatic downgrade on the detection of an error. To allow for automatic downgrade, the SRMs pass error information to the SMS. The SMS may cause the system to revert to the old configuration and application (i.e., automatic downgrade) on any error or only for particular errors.

As mentioned, often upgrades to one application may cause unexpected faults or errors in other software. If the problem causes a system shut down and the configuration upgrade was stored in persistent storage, then the system, when powered back up, will experience the error again and shut down again. Since, the upgrade changes to the configuration database are not copied to persistent storage 21 until the upgrade is committed, if the computer system is shut down, when it is powered back up, it will use the original version of the configuration database and the original executable files, that is, the computer system will experience an automatic downgrade.

Additionally, a fault induced by an upgrade may cause the system to hang, that is, the computer system will not shut down but will also become inaccessible by the NMS and inoperable. To address this concern, in one embodiment, the NMS and the master SMS periodically send messages to each other indicating they are executing appropriately. If the SMS does not receive one of these messages in a predetermined period of time, then the SMS knows the system has hung. The master SMS may then tell the slave SMSs to revert to the old configuration (i.e., previously executing copies of ATM 188a-188n) and if that does not work, the master SMS may re-start / re-boot computer system 10. Again, because the configuration changes were not saved in persistent storage, when the computer system powers back up, the old configuration will be the one implemented.

Evaluation Mode:

Instead of implementing a change to a distributed application across the entire computer system, an evaluation mode allows the SMS to implement the change in only a portion of the computer system. If the evaluation mode is successful, then the SMS may fully implement the change system wide. If the evaluation mode is unsuccessful, then service interruption is limited to only that portion of the computer system on which the upgrade was deployed. In the above example, instead of executing the upgraded ATMv2 189 on each of the line cards, the ATMv2 configuration convert file 191 will create an ATMv2 group table 108' indicating an upgrade only to one line card, for example, line card 16a. Moreover, if multiple instantiations of ATM are running on line card 16a (e.g., one instantiation per port), the ATMv2 configuration convert file may indicate through

ATMv2 interface table 114' that the upgrade is for only one instantiation (e.g., one port) on line card 16a. Consequently, a failure is likely to only disrupt service on that one port, and again, the SMS can further minimize the disruption by automatically downgrading the configuration of that port on the detection of an error. If no error is detected during the evaluation mode, then the upgrade can be implemented over the entire computer system.

Upgrade Commitment:

Upgrades are made permanent by saving the new application software and new configuration database and DDL file in persistent storage and removing the old configuration data from memory 40 as well as persistent storage. As mentioned above, changes may be automatically saved in persistent storage as they are made in non-persistent memory (no automatic downgrade), or the user may choose to automatically commit an upgrade after a successful time interval lapses (evaluation mode). The time interval from upgrade to commitment may be significant. During this time, configuration changes may be made to the system. Since these changes are typically made in non-persistent memory, they will be lost if the system is rebooted prior to upgrade commitment. Instead, to maintain the changes, the user may request that certain configuration changes made prior to upgrade commitment be copied into the old configuration database in persistent memory. Alternatively, the user may choose to manually commit the upgrade at his or her leisure. In the manual mode, the user would ask the NMS to commit the upgrade and the NMS would inform the master SMS, for example, through a record in the SMS table.

Independent Process Failure and Restart:

Depending upon the fault policy managed by the slave SRMs on each board, the failure of an application or device driver may not immediately cause an automatic downgrade during an upgrade process. Similarly, the failure of an application or device driver during normal operation may not immediately cause the fail over to a backup or redundant board. Instead, the slave SRM running on the board may simply restart the failing

process. After multiple failures by the same process, the fault policy may cause the SRM to take more aggressive measures such as automatic downgrade or fail-over.

Referring to Fig. 24, if an application, for example, ATM application 230 fails, the slave SRM on the same board as ATM 230 may simply restart it without having to reboot the entire system. As described above, under the protected memory model, a failing process cannot corrupt the memory blocks used by other processes. Typically, an application and its corresponding device drivers would be part of the same memory block or even part of the same software program, such that if the application failed, both the application and device drivers would need to be restarted. Under the modular software architecture, however, applications, for example ATM application 230, are independent of the device drivers, for example, ATM driver 232 and Device Drivers (DD) 234a-234c. This separation of the data plane (device drivers) and control plane (applications) results in the device drivers being peers of the applications. Hence, while the ATM application is terminated and restarted, the device drivers continue to function.

For network devices, this separation of the control plane and data plane means that the connections previously established by the ATM application are not lost when ATM fails and hardware controlled by the device drivers continue to pass data through connections previously established by the ATM application. Until the ATM application is restarted and re-synchronized (e.g., through an audit process, described below) with the active state of the device drivers, no new network connections may be established but the device drivers continue to pass data through the previously established connections to allow the network device to minimize disruption and maintain high availability.

Local Backup:

If a device driver, for example, device driver 234, fails instead of an application, for example, ATM 230, then data cannot be passed. For a network device, it is critical to continue to pass data and not lose network connections. Hence, the failed device driver must be brought back up (i.e., recovered) as soon as possible. In addition, the failing device driver may have corrupted the hardware it controls, therefore, that hardware must

be reset and reinitialized. The hardware may be reset as soon as the device driver terminates or the hardware may be reset later when the device driver is restarted. Resetting the hardware stops data flow. In some instances, therefore, resetting the hardware will be delayed until the device driver is restarted to minimize the time period during which data is not flowing. Alternatively, the failing device driver may have corrupted the hardware, thus, resetting the hardware as soon as the device driver is terminated may be important to prevent data corruption. In either case, the device driver re-initializes the hardware during its recovery.

Again, because applications and device drivers are assigned independent memory blocks, a failed device driver can be restarted without having to restart associated applications and device drivers. Independent recovery may save significant time as described above for applications. In addition, restoring the data plane (i.e., device drivers) can be simpler and faster than restoring the control plane (i.e., applications). While it may be just as challenging in terms of raw data size, device driver recovery may simply require that critical state data be copied into place in a few large blocks, as opposed to application recovery which requires the successive application of individual configuration elements and considerable parsing, checking and analyzing. In addition, the application may require data stored in the configuration database on the central processor or data stored in the memory of other boards. The configuration database may be slow to access especially since many other applications also access this database. The application may also need time to access a management information base (MIB) interface.

To increase the speed with which a device driver is brought back up, the restarted device driver program accesses local backup 236. In one example, local backup is a simple storage/retrieval process that maintains the data in simple lists in physical memory (e.g., random access memory, RAM) for quick access. Alternatively, local backup may be a database process, for example, a Polyhedra database, similar to the configuration database.

Local backup 236 stores the last snap shot of critical state information used by the original device driver before it failed. The data in local backup 236 is in the format required by the device driver. In the case of a network device, local back up data may include path information, for example, service endpoint, path width and path location. Local back up data may also include virtual interface information, for example, which virtual interfaces were configured on which paths and virtual circuit (VC) information, for example, whether each VC is switched or passed through segmentation and reassembly (SAR), whether each VC is a virtual channel or virtual path and whether each VC is multicast or merge. The data may also include traffic parameters for each VC, for example, service class, bandwidth and/or delay requirements.

Using the data in the local backup allows the device driver to quickly recover. An Audit process resynchronizes the restarted device driver with associated applications and other device drivers such that the data plane can again transfer network data. Having the backup be local reduces recovery time. Alternatively, the backup could be stored remotely on another board but the recovery time would be increased by the amount of time required to download the information from the remote location.

Audit Process:

It is virtually impossible to ensure that a failed process is synchronized with other processes when it restarts, even when backup data is available. For example, an ATM application may have set up or torn down a connection with a device driver but the device driver failed before it updated corresponding backup data. When the device driver is restarted, it will have a different list of established connections than the corresponding ATM application (i.e., out of synchronization). The audit process allows processes like device drivers and ATM applications to compare information, for example, connection tables, and resolve differences. For instance, connections included in the driver's connection table and not in the ATM connection table were likely torn down by ATM prior to the device driver crash and are, therefore, deleted from the device driver connection table. Connections that exist in the ATM connection table and not in the device driver connection table were likely set up prior to the device driver failure and

may be copied into the device driver connection table or deleted from the ATM connection table and re-set up later. If an ATM application fails and is restarted, it must execute an audit procedure with its corresponding device driver or drivers as well as with other ATM applications since this is a distributed application.

Vertical Fault Isolation:

For resiliency and fault isolation one or more instances of an application and/or device driver may be started per port on each line card. Multiple instances of applications and device drivers are more difficult to manage and require more processor cycles than a single instance of each but if an application or device driver fails, only the port those processes are associated with is affected. Other applications and associated ports – as well as the customers serviced by those ports -- will not experience service outages. Similarly, a hardware failure associated with only one port will only affect the processes associated with that port. This is referred to as vertical fault isolation.

Vertical fault isolation allows processes to be deployed in a fashion supportive of the underlying hardware architecture and allows processes associated with particular hardware (e.g., a port) to be isolated from processes associated with other hardware (e.g., other ports) on the same or a different line card. Any single hardware or software failure will affect only those customers serviced by the same vertical stack. Vertical fault isolation provides a fine grain of fault isolation and containment. In addition, recovery time is reduced to only the time required to re-start a particular application or driver instead of the time required to re-start all the processes associated with a line card or the entire system.

Fault / Event Detection:

Traditionally, fault detection and monitoring does not receive a great deal of attention from network equipment designers. Hardware components are subjected to a suite of diagnostic tests when the system powers up. After that, the only way to detect a hardware failure is to watch for a red light on a board or wait for a software component to fail when it attempts to use the faulty hardware. Software monitoring is also reactive. When a program fails, the operating system usually detects the failure and records minimal debug information.

Current methods provide only sporadic coverage for a narrow set of hard faults. Many subtler failures and events often go undetected. For example, hardware components sometimes suffer a minor deterioration in functionality, and changing network conditions stress the software in ways that were never expected by the designers. At times, the software may be equipped with the appropriate instrumentation to detect these problems before they become hard failures, but even then, network operators are responsible for manually detecting and repairing the conditions.

Systems with high availability goals must adopt a more proactive approach to fault and event monitoring. In order to provide comprehensive fault and event detection, different hierarchical levels of fault/event management software are provided that intelligently

In addition, a fault policy table 429 may be created in configuration database 42 by the NMS when the user wishes to over-ride some or all of the default fault policy (see configurable fault policy below), and the master and slave SRMs are notified of the fault policies through the active query process.

Referring to Fig. 27, as one example, ATM application 110 includes many sub-processes including, for example, an LRM program 436, a Private Network-to-Network Interface (PNNI) program 437, an Interim Link Management Interface (ILMI) program 438, a Service Specific Connection Oriented Protocol (SSCOP) program 439, and an ATM signaling (SIG) program 440. ATM application 110 may include many other sub-programs only a few have been shown for convenience. Each sub-process may also include sub-processes, for example, ILMI sub-processes 438a-438n. In general, the upper level application (e.g., ATM 110) is assigned a process memory block that is shared by all its sub-processes.

If, for example, SSCOP 439 detects a fault, it notifies LRM 436. LRM 436 passes the fault to local slave SRM 37b, which catalogs the fault in the ATM application's fault history and sends a notice to local slave logging entity 433b. The slave logging entity sends a notice to master logging entity 431, which may log the event in master log event file 435. The local logging entity may also log the failure in local event log 435a. LRM 436 also determines, based on the type of failure, whether it can fully resolve the error and do so without affecting other processes outside its scope, for example, ATM 111-113, device drivers 43a-43d and their sub-processes and processes running on other boards. If yes, then the LRM takes corrective action in accordance with its fault policy. Corrective action may include restarting SSCOP 439 or resetting it to a known state.

Since all sub-processes within an application, including the LRM sub-process, share the same memory space, it may be insufficient to restart or reset a failing sub-process (e.g., SSCOP 439). Hence, for most failures, the fault policy will cause the LRM to escalate the failure to the local slave SRM. In addition, many failures will not be presented to the

LRM but will, instead, be presented directly to the local slave SRM. These failures are likely to have been detected by either processor exceptions, OS errors or low-level system service errors. Instead of failures, however, the sub-processes may notify the LRM of events that may require action. For example, the LRM may be notified that the PNNI message queue is growing quickly. The LRM's fault policy may direct it to request more memory from the operating system. The LRM will also pass the event to the local slave SRM as a non-fatal fault. The local slave SRM will catalog the event and log it with the local logging entity, which may also log it with the master logging entity. The local slave SRM may take more severe action to recover from an excessive number of these non-fatal faults that result in memory requests.

If the event or fault (or the actions required to handle either) will affect processes outside the LRM's scope, then the LRM notifies slave SRM 37b of the event or failure. In addition, if the LRM detects and logs the same failure or event multiple times and in excess of a predetermined threshold set within the fault policy, the LRM may escalate the failure or event to the next hierarchical scope by notifying slave SRM 37b. Alternatively or in addition, the slave SRM may use the fault history for the application instance to determine when a threshold is exceeded and automatically execute its fault policy.

When slave SRM 37b detects or is notified of a failure or event, it notifies slave logging entity 435b. The slave logging entity notifies master logging entity 431, which may log the failure or event in master event log 435, and the slave logging entity may also log the failure or event in local event log 435b. Slave SRM 37b also determines, based on the type of failure or event, whether it can handle the error without affecting other processes outside its scope, for example, processes running on other boards. If yes, then slave SRM 37b takes corrective action in accordance with its fault policy and logs the fault. Corrective action may include re-starting one or more applications on line card 16a.

If the fault or recovery actions will affect processes outside the slave SRM's scope, then the slave SRM notifies master SRM 36. In addition, if the slave SRM has detected and logged the same failure multiple times and in excess of a predetermined threshold, then

the slave SRM may escalate the failure to the next hierarchical scope by notifying master SRM 36 of the failure. Alternatively, the master SRM may use its fault history for a particular line card to determine when a threshold is exceeded and automatically execute its fault policy.

When master SRM 36 detects or receives notice of a failure or event, it notifies slave logging entity 433a, which notifies master logging entity 431. The master logging entity 431 may log the failure or event in master log file 435 and the slave logging entity may log the failure or event in local event log 435a. Master SRM 36 also determines the appropriate corrective action based on the type of failure or event and its fault policy. Corrective action may require failing-over one or more line cards 16a-16n or other boards, including central processor 12, to redundant backup boards or, where backup boards are not available, simply shutting particular boards down. Some failures may require the master SRM to re-boot the entire computer system.

An example of a common error is a memory access error. As described above, when the slave SRM starts a new instance of an application, it requests a protected memory block from the local operating system. The local operating systems assign each instance of an application one block of local memory and then program the local memory management unit (MMU) hardware with which processes have access (read and/or write) to each block of memory. An MMU detects a memory access error when a process attempts to access a memory block not assigned to that process. This type of error may result when the process generates an invalid memory pointer. The MMU prevents the failing process from corrupting memory blocks used by other processes (i.e., protected memory model) and sends a hardware exception to the local processor. A local operating system fault handler detects the hardware exception and determines which process attempted the invalid memory access. The fault handler then notifies the local slave SRM of the hardware exception and the process that caused it. The slave SRM determines the application instance within which the fault occurred and then goes through the process described above to determine whether to take corrective action, such as restarting the application, or escalate the fault to the master SRM.

As another example, a device driver, for example, device driver 43a may determine that the hardware associated with its port, for example, port 44a, is in a bad state. Since the failure may require the hardware to be swapped out or failed-over to redundant hardware or the device driver itself to be re-started, the device driver notifies slave SRM 37b. The slave SRM then goes through the process described above to determine whether to take corrective action or escalate the fault to the master SRM.

As a third example, if a particular application instance repeatedly experiences the same software error but other similar application instances running on different ports do not experience the same error, the slave SRM may determine that it is likely a hardware error. The slave SRM would then notify the master SRM which may initiate a fail-over to a backup board or, if no backup board exists, simply shut down that board or only the failing port on that board. Similarly, if the master SRM receives failure reports from multiple boards indicating Ethernet failures, the master SRM may determine that the Ethernet hardware is the problem and initiate a fail-over to backup Ethernet hardware.

Consequently, the failure type and the failure policy determine at what scope recovery action will be taken. The higher the scope of the recovery action, the larger the temporary loss of services. Speed of recovery is one of the primary considerations when establishing a fault policy. Restarting a single software process is much faster than switching over an entire board to a redundant board or re-booting the entire computer system. When a single process is restarted, only a fraction of a card's services are affected. Allowing failures to be handled at appropriate hierarchical levels avoids unnecessary recovery actions while ensuring that sufficient recovery actions are taken, both of which minimize service disruption to customers.

Hierarchical Descriptors:

Hierarchical descriptors may be used to provide information specific to each failure or event. The hierarchical descriptors provide granularity with which to report faults, take action based on fault history and apply fault recovery policies. The descriptors can be

stored in master event log file 435 or local event log files 435a-435n through which faults and events may be tracked and displayed to the user and allow for fault detection at a fine granular level and proactive response to events. In addition, the descriptors can be matched with descriptors in the fault policy to determine the recovery action to be taken.

Referring to Fig. 28, in one embodiment, a descriptor 441 includes a top hierarchical class field 442, a next hierarchical level sub-class field 444, a lower hierarchical level type field 446 and a lowest level instance field 448. The class field indicates whether the failure or event is related (or suspected to relate) to hardware or software. The subclass field categorizes events and failures into particular hardware or software groups. For example, under the hardware class, subclass indications may include whether the fault or event is related to memory, Ethernet, switch fabric or network data transfer hardware. Under the software class, subclass indications may include whether the fault or event is a system fault, an exception or related to a specific application, for example, ATM.

The type field more specifically defines the subclass failure or event. For example, if a hardware class, Ethernet subclass failure has occurred, the type field may indicate a more specific type of Ethernet failure, for instance, a cyclic redundancy check (CRC) error or a runt packet error. Similarly, if a software class, ATM failure or event has occurred, the type field may indicate a more specific type of ATM failure or event, for instance, a private network-to-network interface (PNNI) error or a growing message queue event. The instance field identifies the actual hardware or software that failed or generated the event. For example, with regard to a hardware class, Ethernet subclass, CRC type failure, the instance indicates the actual Ethernet port that experienced the failure. Similarly, with regard to a software class, ATM subclass, PNNI type, the instance indicates the actual PNNI sub-program that experienced the failure or generated the event.

When a fault or event occurs, the hierarchical scope that first detects the failure or event creates a descriptor by filling in the fields described above. In some cases, however, the Instance field is not applicable. The descriptor is sent to the local logging entity, which may log it in the local event log file before notifying the master logging entity, which

may log it in the master event log file 435. The descriptor may also be sent to the local slave SRM, which tracks fault history based on the descriptor contents per application instance. If the fault or event is escalated, then the descriptor is passed to the next higher hierarchical scope.

When slave SRM 37b receives the fault / event notification and the descriptor, it compares it to descriptors in the fault policy for the particular scope in which the fault occurred looking for a match or a best case match which will indicate the recovery procedure to follow. Fault descriptors within the fault policy can either be complete descriptors or have wildcards in one or more fields. Since the descriptors are hierarchical from left to right, wildcards in descriptor fields only make sense from right to left. The fewer the fields with wildcards, the more specific the descriptor. For example, a particular fault policy may apply to all software faults and would, therefore, include a fault descriptor having the class field set to "software" and the remaining fields - subclass, type, and instance - set to wildcard or "match all." The slave SRM searches the fault policy for the best match (i.e., the most fields matched) with the descriptor to determine the recovery action to be taken.

Configurable Fault Policy:

In actual use, a computer system is likely to encounter scenarios that differ from those in which the system was designed and tested. Consequently, it is nearly impossible to determine all the ways in which a computer system might fail, and in the face of an unexpected error, the default fault policy that was shipped with the computer system may cause the hierarchical scope (master SRM, slave SRM or LRM) to under-react or over-react. Even for expected errors, after a computer system ships, certain recovery actions in the default fault policy may be determined to be over aggressive or too lenient. Similar issues may arise as new software and hardware is released and/or upgraded.

A configurable fault policy allows the default fault policy to be modified to address behavior specific to a particular upgrade or release or to address behavior that was learned after the implementation was released. In addition, a configurable fault policy

allows users to perform manual overrides to suit their specific requirements and to tailor their policies based on the individual failure scenarios that they are experiencing. The modification may cause the hierarchical scope to react more or less aggressively to particular known faults or events, and the modification may add recovery actions to handle newly learned faults or events. The modification may also provide a temporary patch while a software or hardware upgrade is developed to fix a particular error.

If an application runs out of memory space, it notifies the operating system and asks for more memory. For certain applications, this is standard operating procedure. As an example, an ATM application may have set up a large number of virtual circuits and to continue setting up more, additional memory is needed. For other applications, a request for more memory indicates a memory leak error. The fault policy may require that the application be re-started causing some service disruption. It may be that re-starting the application eventually leads to the same error due to a bug in the software. In this instance, while a software upgrade to fix the bug is developed, a temporary patch to the fault policy may be necessary to allow the memory leak to continue and prevent repeated application re-starts that may escalate to line card re-start or fail-over and eventually to a re-boot of the entire computer system. A temporary patch to the default fault policy may simply allow the hierarchical scope, for example, the local resiliency manager or the slave SRM, to assign additional memory to the application. Of course, an eventual re-start of the application is likely to be required if the application's leak consumes too much memory.

A temporary patch may also be needed while a hardware upgrade or fix is developed for a particular hardware fault. For instance, under the default fault policy, when a particular hardware fault occurs, the recovery policy may be to fail-over to a backup board. If the backup board includes the same hardware with the same hardware bug, for example, a particular semiconductor chip, then the same error will occur on the backup board. To prevent a repetitive fail-over while a hardware fix is developed, the temporary patch to the default fault policy may be to restart the device driver associated with the particular hardware instead of failing-over to the backup board.

In addition to the above needs, a configurable fault policy also allows purchasers of computer system 10 (e.g., network service providers) to define their own policies. For example, a network service provider may have a high priority customer on a particular port and may want all errors and events (even minor ones) to be reported to the NMS and displayed to the network manager. Watching all errors and events might give the network manager early notice of growing resource consumption and the need to plan to dedicate additional resources to this customer.

As another example, a user of computer system 10 may want to be notified when any process requests more memory. This may give the user early notice of the need to add more memory to their system or to move some customers to different line cards.

Referring again to Fig. 26, to change the default fault policy as defined by default fault policy (DFP) files 430a-430n, a configuration fault policy file 429 is created by the NMS in the configuration database. An active query notification is sent by the configuration database to the master SRM indicating the changes to the default fault policy. The master SRM notifies any slave SRMs of any changes to the default fault policies specific to the boards on which they are executing, and the slave SRMs notify any LRMs of any changes to the default fault policies specific to their process. Going forward, the default fault policies - as modified by the configuration fault policy - are used to detect, track and respond to events or failures.

Alternatively, active queries may be established with the configuration database for configuration fault policies specific to each board type such that the slave SRMs are notified directly of changes to their default fault policies.

A fault policy (whether default or configured) is specific to a particular scope and descriptor and indicates a particular recovery action to take. As one example, a temporary patch may be required to handle hardware faults specific to a known bug in an integrated circuit chip. The configured fault policy, therefore, may indicate a scope of all

line cards, if the component is on all line cards, or only a specific type of line card that includes that component. The configured fault policy may also indicate that it is to be applied to all hardware faults with that scope, for example, the class will indicate hardware (HW) and all other fields will include wildcards (e.g., HW.*.*). Instead, the configured fault policy may only indicate a particular type of hardware failure, for example, CRC errors on transmitted Ethernet packets (e.g., HW.Ethernet.TxCRC.*).

Redundancy:

As previously mentioned, a major concern for service providers is network downtime. In pursuit of “five 9’s availability” or 99.999% network up time, service providers must minimize network outages due to equipment (i.e., hardware) and all too common software failures. Developers of computer systems often use redundancy measures to minimize downtime and enhance system resiliency. Redundant designs rely on alternate or backup resources to overcome hardware and/or software faults. Ideally, the redundancy architecture allows the computer system to continue operating in the face of a fault with minimal service disruption, for example, in a manner transparent to the service provider’s customer.

Generally, redundancy designs come in two forms: 1:1 and 1:N. In a so-called “1:1 redundancy” design, a backup element exists for every active or primary element (i.e., hardware backup). In the event that a fault affects a primary element, a corresponding backup element is substituted for the primary element. If the backup element has not been in a “hot” state (i.e., software backup), then the backup element must be booted, configured to operate as a substitute for the failing element, and also provided with the “active state” of the failing element to allow the backup element to take over where the failed primary element left off. The time required to bring the software on the backup element to an “active state” is referred to as synchronization time. A long synchronization time can significantly disrupt system service, and in the case of a computer network device, if synchronization is not done quickly enough, then hundreds or thousands of network connections may be lost which directly impacts the service provider’s availability statistics and angers network customers.

density and better mean time between failures than the 1:1 design and requires a smaller chassis / less space than a 1:1 design. One disadvantage of such a system, however, is that once a primary element fails over to the backup element, the system is no longer redundant (i.e., no available backup element for any primary element). Another disadvantage relates to hot state backup. Because one backup element must support multiple primary elements, the typical 1:N design provides no hot state on the backup element leading to long synchronization times and, for network devices, the likelihood that connections will be dropped and availability reduced.

Even where the backup element provides some level of hot state backup it generally lacks the processing power and memory to provide a full hot state backup (i.e., 1+N) for all primary elements. To enable some level of hot state backup for each primary element, the backup element is generally a “mega spare” equipped with a more powerful processor and additional memory. This requires customers to stock more hardware than in a design with identical backup and primary elements. For instance, users typically maintain extra hardware in the case of a failure. If a primary fails over to the backup, the failed primary may be replaced with a new primary. If the primary and backup elements are identical, then users need only stock that one type of board, that is, a failed backup is also replaced with the same hardware used to replace the failed primary. If they are different, then the user must stock each type of board, thereby increasing the user’s cost.

Distributed Redundancy:

A distributed redundancy architecture spreads software backup (hot state) across multiple elements. Each element may provide software backup for one or more other elements. For software backup alone, therefore, the distributed redundancy architecture eliminates the need for hardware backup elements (i.e., spare hardware). Where hardware backup is also provided, spreading resource demands across multiple elements makes it possible to have significant (perhaps full) hot state backup without the need for a mega spare. Identical backup (spare) and primary hardware provides manufacturing advantages and customer inventory advantages. A distributed redundancy design is less expensive than many 1:1 designs and a distributed redundancy architecture also permits the location of

the hardware backup element to float, that is, if a primary element fails over to the backup element, when the failed primary element is replaced, that new hardware may serve as the hardware backup.

Software Redundancy:

In its simplest form, a distributed redundancy system provides software redundancy (i.e., backup) with or without redundant (i.e., backup) hardware, for example, with or without using backup line card 16n as discussed earlier with reference to the logical to physical card table (Fig. 11a). Referring to Fig. 29, computer system 10 includes primary line cards 16a, 16b and 16c. Computer system 10 will likely include additional primary line cards; only three are discussed herein (and shown in Fig. 29) for convenience. As described above, to load instances of software applications, the NMS creates software load records (SLR) 128a-128n in configuration database 42. The SLR includes the name of a control shim executable file and a logical identification (LID) associated with a primary line card on which the application is to be spawned. In the current example, there either are no hardware backup line cards or, if there are, the slave SRM executing on that line card does not download and execute backup applications.

As one example, NMS 60 creates SLR 128a including the executable name atm_cntrl.exe and card LID 30 (line card 16a), SLR 128b including atm_cntrl.exe and LID 31 (line card 16b) and SLR 128c including atm_cntrl.exe and LID 32 (line card 16c). The configuration database detects LID 30, 31 and 32 in SLRs 128a, 128b and 128c, respectively, and sends slave SRMs 37b, 37c and 37d (line cards 16a, 16b, and 16c) notifications including the name of the executable file (e.g., atm_cntrl.exe) to be loaded. The slave SRMs then download and execute a copy of atm_cntrl.exe 135 from memory 40 to spawn ATM controllers 136a, 136b and 136c.

Through the active query feature, the ATM controllers are sent records from group table (GT) 108' (Fig. 30) indicating how many instances of ATM each must start on their associated line cards. Group table 108' includes a primary line card LID field 447 and a backup line card LID field 449 such that, in addition to starting primary instances of

Massachusetts may be used to allow backup and primary instantiations to pass dynamic state information. If the primary instantiation fails, it can be re-started, retrieve its last known dynamic state from the backup instantiation and then initiate an audit procedure (as described above) to resynchronize with other processes. The retrieval and audit process will normally be completed very quickly, resulting in no discernable service disruption.

Although each line card in the example above is instructed by the group table to start four instantiations of ATM, this is by way of example only. The user could instruct the NMS to set up the group table to have each line card start one or more instantiations and to have each line card start a different number of instantiations.

Referring to Fig. 31a-31c, if one or more of the primary processes on element 16a (ATM 464-467) experiences a software fault (Fig. 31b), the processor on line card 16a may terminate and restart the failing process or processes. Once the process or processes are restarted (ATM 464'-467', Fig. 31c), they retrieve a copy of the last known dynamic state (i.e., backup state) from corresponding backup processes (ATM 476-479) executing on line card 16b and initiate an audit process to synchronize retrieved state with the dynamic state of associated other processes. The backup state represents the last known active or dynamic state of the process or processes prior to termination, and retrieving this state from line card 16b allows the restarted processes on line card 16a to quickly resynchronize and continue operating. The retrieval and audit process will normally be completed very quickly, and in the case of a network device, quick resynchronization may avoid losing network connections, resulting in no discernable service disruption.

If, instead of restarting a particular application, the software fault experienced by line card 16a requires the entire element to be shut down and rebooted, then all of the processes executing on line card 16a will be terminated including backup processes ATM 468-471. When the primary processes are restarted, backup state information is retrieved from backup processes executing on line card 16b as explained above. Simultaneously, the restarted backup processes on line card 16a again initiate the check-pointing

procedure with primary ATM processes 480-483 executing on line card 16c to again serve as backup processes for these primary processes. Referring to Figs. 32a-32c, the primary processes executing on one line card may be backed-up by backup processes running on one or more other line cards. In addition, each primary process may be backed-up by one or more backup processes executing on one or more of the other line cards.

Since the operating system assigns each process its own memory block, each primary process may be backed-up by a backup process running on the same line card. This would minimize the time required to retrieve backup state and resynchronize if a primary process fails and is restarted. In a computer system that includes a spare or backup line card (described below), the backup state is best saved on another line card such that in the event of a hardware fault, the backup state is not lost and can be copied from the other line card. If memory and processor limitations permit, backup processes may run simultaneously on the same line card as the primary process and on another line card such that software faults are recovered from using local backup state and hardware faults are recovered from using remote backup state.

Where limitations on processing power or memory make full hot state backup impossible or impractical, only certain hot state data will be stored as backup. The level of hot state backup is inversely proportional to the resynchronization time, that is, as the level of hot state backup increases, resynchronization time decreases. For a network device, backup state may include critical information that allows the primary process to quickly re-synchronize.

Critical information for a network device may include connection data relevant to established network connections (e.g., call set up information and virtual circuit information). For example, after primary ATM applications 464-467, executing on line card 16a, establish network connections, those applications send critical state information relevant to those connections to backup ATM applications 479-476 executing on line card 16b. Retrieving connection data allows the hardware (i.e., line card 16a) to send and

receive network data over the previously established network connections preventing these connections from being terminated / dropped.

Although ATM applications were used in the examples above, this is by way of example only. Any application (e.g., IP or MPLS), process (e.g., MCD or NS) or device driver (e.g., port driver) may have a backup process started on another line card to store backup state through a check-pointing procedure.

Hardware and Software Backup:

By adding one or more hardware backup elements (e.g., line card 16n) to the computer system, the distributed redundancy architecture provides both hardware and software backup. Software backup may be spread across all of the line cards or only some of the line cards. For example, software backup may be spread only across the primary line cards, only on one or more backup line cards or on a combination of both primary and backup line cards.

Referring to Fig. 33a, in the continuing example, line cards 16a, 16b and 16c are primary hardware elements and line card 16n is a spare or backup hardware element. In this example, software backup is spread across only the primary line cards. Alternatively, backup line card 16n may also execute backup processes to provide software backup. Backup line card 16n may execute all backup processes such that the primary elements need not execute any backup processes or line card 16n may execute only some of the backup processes. Regardless of whether backup line card 16n executes any backup processes, it is preferred that line card 16n be at least partially operational and ready to use the backup processes to quickly begin performing as if it was a failed primary line card.

There are many levels at which a backup line card may be partially operational. For example, the backup line card's hardware may be configured and device driver processes 490 loaded and ready to execute. In addition, the active state of the device drivers 492, 494, and 496 on each of the primary line cards may be stored as backup device driver

state (DDS) 498, 500, 502 on backup line card 16n such that after a primary line card fails, the backup device driver state corresponding to that primary element is used by device driver processes 490 to quickly synchronize the hardware on backup line card 16n. In addition, data reflecting the network connections established by each primary process may be stored within each of the backup processes or independently on backup line card 16n, for example, connection data (CD) 504, 506, 508. Having a copy of the connection data on the backup line card allows the hardware to quickly begin transmitting network data over previously established connections to avoid the loss of these connections and minimize service disruption. The more operational (i.e., hotter) backup line card 16n is the faster it will be able to transfer data over network connections previously established by the failed primary line card and resynchronize with the rest of the system.

In the case of a primary line card hardware fault, the backup or spare line card takes the place of the failed primary line card. The backup line card starts new primary processes that register with the name server on the backup line card and begin retrieving active state from backup processes associated with the original primary processes. As described above, the same may also be true for software faults. Referring to Fig. 33b, if, for example, line card 16a in computer system 10 is affected by a fault, the slave SRM executing on backup line card 16n may start new primary processes 464'-467' corresponding to the original primary processes 464-467. The new primary processes register with the name server process executing on line card 16n and begin retrieving active state from backup processes 476-479 on line card 16b. This is referred to as a "fail-over" from failed primary line card 16a to backup line card 16n.

As discussed above, preferably, backup line card 16n is partially operational. While active state is being retrieved from backup processes on line card 16b, device driver processes 490 use device driver state 502 and connection data 508 corresponding to failed primary line card 16a to quickly continue passing network data over previously established connections. Once the active state is retrieved then the ATM applications resynchronize and may begin establishing new connections and tearing down old connections.

backup line card, the person acting as network manager, may prefer to have the backup line card in each of his computer systems in the same slot. In either case, where only line card 16n serves as the backup line card, once line card 16a (or any other failed primary line card) is ready to act as a primary line card again, a fail-over, as described above, is initiated from line card 16n to the primary line card to allow line card 16n to again serve as a backup line card to each of the primary line cards.

Balancing Resources:

Typically, multiple processes or applications are executed on each primary line card. Referring to Fig. 34a, in one embodiment, each primary line card 16a, 16b, 16c executes four applications. Due to physical limitations (e.g., memory space, processor power), each primary line card may not be capable of fully backing up four applications executing on another primary line card. The distributed redundancy architecture allows backup processes to be spread across multiple line cards, including any backup line cards, to more efficiently use all system resources.

For instance, primary line card 16a executes backup processes 510 and 512 corresponding to primary processes 474 and 475 executing on primary line card 16b. Primary line card 16b executes backup processes 514 and 516 corresponding to primary processes 482 and 483 executing on primary line card 16c, and primary line card 16c executes backup processes 518 and 520 corresponding to primary processes 466 and 467 executing on primary line card 16a. Backup line card 16n executes backup processes 520, 522, 524, 526, 528 and 530 corresponding to primary processes 464, 465, 472, 473, 480 and 481 executing on each of the primary line cards. Having each primary line card execute backup processes for only two primary processes executing on another primary line card reduces the primary line card resources required for backup. Since backup line card 16n is not executing primary processes, more resources are available for backup. Hence, backup line card 16n executes six backup processes corresponding to six primary processes executing on primary line cards. In addition, backup line card 16n is partially operational and is executing device driver processes 490 and storing device driver backup state 498, 500 and 502 corresponding to the device drivers on each of the primary

elements and network connection data 504, 506 and 508 corresponding to the network connections established by each of the primary line cards.

Alternatively, each primary line card could execute more or less than two backup processes. Similarly, each primary line card could execute no backup processes and backup line card 16n could execute all backup processes. Many alternatives are possible and backup processes need not be spread evenly across all primary line cards or all primary line cards and the backup line card.

Referring to Fig. 5b, if primary line card 16b experiences a failure, device drivers 490 on backup line card 16n begins using the device driver state, for example, DDS 498, corresponding to the device drivers on primary line card 16b and the network connection data, for example, CD 506, corresponding to the connections established by primary line card 16b to continue transferring network data. Simultaneously, backup line card 16n starts substitute primary processes 510' and 512' corresponding to the primary processes 474 and 475 on failed primary line card 16b. Substitute primary processes 510' and 512' retrieve active state from backup processes 510 and 512 executing on primary line card 16a. In addition, the slave SRM on backup line card 16n informs backup processes 526 and 524 corresponding to primary processes 472 and 473 on failed primary line card 16b that they are now primary processes. The new primary applications then synchronize with the rest of the system such that new network connections may be established and old network connections torn down. That is, backup line card 16n begins operating as if it were primary line card 16b.

Multiple Backup Elements:

In the examples given above, one backup line card is shown. Alternatively, multiple backup line cards may be provided in a computer system. In one embodiment, a computer system includes multiple different primary line cards. For example, some primary line cards may support the Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) protocol while others support the Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) protocol, and one backup line card may be provided for the ATM primary line cards and another backup line card may

be provided for the MPLS primary line cards. As another example, some primary line cards may support four ports while others support eight ports and one backup line card may be provided for the four port primaries and another backup line card may be provided for the eight port primaries. One or more backup line cards may be provided for each different type of primary line card.

Data Plane:

Referring to Fig. 35, a network device 540 includes a central processor 542, a redundant central processor 543 and a Fast Ethernet control bus 544 similar to central processors 12 and 13 and Ethernet 32 discussed above with respect to computer system 10. In addition, network device 540 includes forwarding cards (FC) 546a-546e, 548a-548e, 550a-550e and 552a-552e that are similar to line cards 16a-16n discussed above with respect to computer system 10. Network device 540 also includes (and computer system 10 may also include) universal port (UP) cards 554a-554h, 556a-556h, 558a-558h, and 560a-560h, cross-connection (XC) cards 562a-562b, 564a-564b, 566a-566b, and 568a-568b, and switch fabric (SF) cards 570a-570b. In one embodiment, network device 540 includes four quadrants where each quadrant includes five forwarding cards (e.g., 546a-546e), two cross connection cards (e.g., 562a-562b) and eight universal port cards (e.g., 554a-554h). Network device 540 is a distributed processing system. Each of the cards includes a processor and is connected to the Ethernet control bus. In addition, each of the cards are configured as described above with respect to line cards.

In one embodiment, the forwarding cards have a 1:4 hardware redundancy structure and distributed software redundancy as described above. For example, forwarding card 546e is the hardware backup for primary forwarding cards 546a-546d and each of the forwarding cards provide software backup. The cross-connection cards are 1:1 redundant. For example, cross-connection card 562b provides both hardware and software backup for cross-connection card 562a. Each port on the universal port cards may be 1:1, 1+1, 1:N redundant or not redundant at all depending upon the quality of service paid for by the customer associated with that port. For example, port cards 554e-554h may be the hardware and software backup cards for port cards 554a-554d in which

case the port cards are 1:1 or 1+1 redundant. As another example, one or more ports on port card 554a may be backed-up by separate ports on one or more port cards (e.g., port cards 554b and 554c) such that each port is 1:1 or 1+1 redundant, one or more ports on port card 554a may not be backed-up at all (i.e., not redundant) and two or more ports on 554a may be backed-up by one port on another port card (e.g., port card 554b) such that those ports are 1:N redundant. Many redundancy structures are possible using the LID to PID Card table (LPCT) 100 (Fig. 9a) and LID to PID Port table (LPPT) as described above.

Each port card includes one or more ports for connecting to external network connections. One type of network connection is an optical fiber carrying an OC-48 SONET stream, and as described above, an OC-48 SONET stream may include connections to one or more end points using one or more paths. A SONET fiber carries a time division multiplexed (TDM) byte stream of aggregated time slots (TS). A time slot has a bandwidth of 51 Mbps and is the fundamental unit of bandwidth for SONET. An STS-1 path has one time slot within the byte stream dedicated to it, while an STS-3c path (i.e., three concatenated STS-1s) has three time slots within the byte stream dedicated to it. The same or different protocols may be carried over different paths within the same TDM byte stream. In other words, ATM over SONET may be carried on an STS-1 path within a TDM byte stream that also includes IP over SONET on another STS-1 path or on an STS-3c path.

Through network management system 60 on workstation 62, after a user connects an external network connection to a port, the user may enable that port and one or more paths within that port (described below). Data received on a port card path is passed to the cross-connection card in the same quadrant as the port card, and the cross-connection card passes the path data to one of the five forwarding cards or eight port cards also within the same quadrant. The forwarding card determines whether the payload (e.g., packets, frames or cells) it is receiving includes user payload data or network control information. The forwarding card itself processes certain network control information and sends certain other network control information to the central processor over the Fast

Ethernet control bus. The forwarding card also generates network control payloads and receives network control payloads from the central processor. The forwarding card sends any user data payloads from the cross-connection card or control information from itself or the central processor as path data to the switch fabric card. The switch fabric card then passes the path data to one of the forwarding cards in any quadrant, including the forwarding card that just sent the data to the switch fabric card. That forwarding card then sends the path data to the cross-connection card within its quadrant, which passes the path data to one of the port cards within its quadrant.

Referring to Fig. 36, in one embodiment, a universal port card 554a includes one or more ports 571a-571n connected to one or more transceivers 572a-572n. The user may connect an external network connection to each port. As one example, port 571a is connected to an ingress optical fiber 576a carrying an OC-48 SONET stream and an egress optical fiber 576b carrying an OC-48 SONET stream. Port 571a passes optical data from the SONET stream on fiber 576a to transceiver 572a. Transceiver 572a converts the optical data into electrical signals that it sends to a SONET framer 574a. The SONET framer organizes the data it receives from the transceiver into SONET frames. SONET framer 574a sends data over a telecommunications bus 578a to a serializer-deserializer (SERDES) 580a that serializes the data into four serial lines with twelve STS-1 time slots each and transmits the four serial lines to cross-connect card 562a.

Each cross-connection card is a switch that provides connections between port cards and forwarding cards within its quadrant. Each cross-connection card is programmed to transfer each serial line on each port card within its quadrant to a forwarding card within its quadrant or to serial line on a port card, including the port card that transmitted the data to the cross-connection card. The programming of the cross-connect card is discussed in more detail below under Policy Based Provisioning.

Each forwarding card (e.g., forwarding card 546c) receives SONET frames over serial lines from the cross-connection card in its quadrant through a payload extractor chip

priority traffic is transmitted, and in times of traffic congestion, the traffic management chips will ensure that low priority traffic is dropped prior to any high priority traffic. The traffic management chips also perform an address translation to add the address of the traffic management chip to which the data is going to be sent by the switch fabric card. The address corresponds to internal virtual circuits set up between forwarding cards by the software and available to the traffic management chips in tables.

The traffic management chips send the modified ATM cells to switch fabric interface chips (SFIF) 589a-589n that then transfer the ATM cells to switch fabric card 570a. The switch fabric card uses the address provided by the ingress traffic management chips to pass ATM cells to the appropriate egress traffic management chips (e.g., TM 590a-590n) on the various forwarding cards. In one embodiment, the switch fabric card 570a is a 320 Gbps, non-blocking fabric. Since each forwarding card serves as both an ingress and egress, the switching fabric card provides a high degree of flexibility in directing the data between any of the forwarding cards, including the forwarding card that sent the data to the switch fabric card.

When a forwarding card (e.g., forwarding card 546c) receives ATM cells from switch fabric card 570a, the egress traffic management chips re-translate the address of each cell and pass the cells to egress bridge chips (e.g., BG 592a-592b). The bridge chips pass the cells to egress ATM interface chips (e.g., ATM IF 594a-594n), and the ATM interface chips add a re-translated address to the payload representing an ATM virtual circuit. The ATM interface chips then send the data to the payload extractor chips (e.g., payload extractor 582a-582n) that separate, where necessary, the path data into STS-1 time slots and combine twelve STS-1 time slots into four serial lines and send the serial lines back through the cross-connection card to the appropriate port card.

The port card SERDES chips receive the serial lines from the cross-connection card and de-serialize the data and send it to SONET framer chips 574a-574n. The Framers properly format the SONET overhead and send the data back through the transceivers

that change the data from electrical to optical before sending it to the appropriate port and SONET fiber.

Although the port card ports above were described as connected to a SONET fiber carrying an OC-48 stream, other SONET fibers carrying other streams (e.g., OC-12) and other types of fibers and cables, for example, Ethernet, may be used instead. The transceivers are standard parts available from many companies, including Hewlett Packard Company and Sumitomo Corporation. The SONET framer may be a Spectra chip available from PMC-Sierra, Inc. in British Columbia. A Spectra 2488 has a maximum bandwidth of 2488 Mbps and may be coupled with a 1xOC48 transceiver coupled with a port connected to a SONET optical fiber carrying an OC-48 stream also having a maximum bandwidth of 2488 Mbps. Instead, four SONET optical fibers carrying OC-12 streams each having a maximum bandwidth of 622Mbps may be connected to four 1xOC12 transceivers and coupled with one Spectra 2488. Alternatively, a Spectra 4x155 may be coupled with four OC-3 transceivers that are coupled with ports connected to four SONET fibers carrying OC-3 streams each having a maximum bandwidth of 155 Mbps. Many variables are possible.

The SERDES chip may be a Telecommunications Bus Serializer (TBS) chip from PMC-Sierra, and each cross-connection card may include a Time Switch Element (TSE) from PMC-Sierra, Inc. Similarly, the payload extractor chips may be MACH 48 chips and the ATM interface chips may be ATLAS chips both of which are available from PMC-Sierra. Several chips are available from Extreme Packet Devices (EPD), a subsidiary of PMC-Sierra, including PP3 bridge chips and Data Path Element (DPE) traffic management chips. The switch fabric interface chips may include a Switch Fabric Interface (SIF) chip also from EPD. Other switch fabric interface chips are available from Abrizio, also a subsidiary of PMC-Sierra, including a data slice chip and an enhanced port processor (EPP) chip. The switch fabric card may also include chips from Abrizio, including a cross-bar chip and a scheduler chip.

Although the port cards, cross-connection cards and forwarding cards have been shown as separate cards, this is by way of example only and they may be combined into one or more different cards.

Multiple Redundancy Schemes:

Coupling universal port cards to forwarding cards through a cross-connection card provides flexibility in data transmission by allowing data to be transmitted from any path on any port to any port on any forwarding card. In addition, decoupling the universal port cards and the forwarding cards enables redundancy schemes (e.g., 1:1, 1+1, 1:N, no redundancy) to be set up separately for the forwarding cards and universal port cards. The same redundancy scheme may be set up for both or they may be different. As described above, the LID to PID card and port tables are used to setup the various redundancy schemes for the line cards (forwarding or universal port cards) and ports. Network devices often implement industry standard redundancy schemes, such as those defined by the Automatic Protection Switching (APS) standard. In network device 540 (Fig. 35), an APS standard redundancy scheme may be implemented for the universal port cards while another redundancy scheme is implemented for the forwarding cards.

Referring again to Fig. 35, further data transmission flexibility may be provided by connecting (i.e., connections 565) each cross-connection card 562a-562b, 564a-564b, 566a-566b and 568a-568b to each of the other cross-connection cards. Through connections 565, a cross-connection card (e.g., cross-connection card 562a) may transmit data between any port or any path on any port on a universal port card (e.g., universal port cards 554a-554h) in its quadrant to a cross-connection card (e.g., cross-connection card 568a) in any other quadrant, and that cross-connection card (e.g., cross-connection card 568a) may transmit the data to any forwarding card (e.g., forwarding cards 552a-552e) or universal port card (e.g., universal port cards 560a-560h) in its quadrant. Similarly, any cross-connection card may transmit data received from any forwarding card in its quadrant to any other cross-connection card and that cross-connection card may transmit the data to any universal port card port in its quadrant.

Alternatively, the cross-connection cards in each quadrant may be coupled only with cross-connection cards in one other quadrant. For example, cross-connection cards in quadrants 1 and 2 may be connected and cross-connection cards in quadrants 3 and 4 may be connected. Similarly, the cross-connection cards in each quadrant may be coupled with cross-connection cards in only two other quadrants, or only the cross-connection cards in one quadrant (e.g., quadrant 1) may be connected to cross-connection cards in another quadrant (e.g., quadrant 2) while the cross-connection cards in the other quadrants (e.g., quadrants 3 and 4) are not connected to other cross-connection cards or are connected only to cross-connection cards in one quadrant (e.g., quadrant 2). Many variations are possible. Although these connections do not provide the flexibility of having all cross-connection cards inter-connected, these connections require less routing resources and still provide some increase in the data transmission flexibility of the network device.

The additional flexibility provided by inter-connecting one or more cross-connection cards may be used to optimize the efficiency of network device 540. For instance, a redundant forwarding card in one quadrant may be used as a backup for primary forwarding cards in other quadrants thereby reducing the number of backup modules and increasing the network device's service density. Similarly, a redundant universal port card or a redundant port on a universal port card in one quadrant may be used as a backup for primary universal port cards or ports in other quadrants. As previously mentioned, each primary forwarding card may support a different protocol (e.g., ATM, MPLS, IP, Frame Relay). Similarly, each universal port card may support a different protocol (e.g., SONET, Ethernet). A backup or spare forwarding card or universal port card must support the same protocol as the primary card or cards. If forwarding or universal port cards in one quadrant support multiple protocols and the cross-connection cards are not interconnected, then each quadrant may need multiple backup forwarding and universal port cards (i.e., one for each protocol supported). If each of the quadrants includes forwarding and universal port cards that support different protocols then each quadrant may include multiple backup forwarding and universal port cards further decreasing the network device's service density.

By inter-connecting the cross-connection cards, a forwarding card in one quadrant may serve as a backup for primary forwarding cards in its own quadrant and in other quadrants. Similarly, a universal port card or port in one quadrant may serve as a backup for a primary universal port card or port in its own quadrant and in other quadrants. For example, forwarding card 546e in quadrant 1 that supports a particular protocol (e.g., the ATM protocol) may serve as the backup forwarding card for primary forwarding cards supporting ATM in its own quadrant (e.g., forwarding cards 546a-546b) as well as for primary forwarding cards supporting ATM in quadrant 2 (e.g., forwarding cards 548b-548c) or all quadrants (e.g., forwarding card 550c in quadrant 3 and forwarding cards 552b-552d in quadrant 4). Similarly, forwarding card 548e in quadrant 2 that supports a different protocol (e.g., the MPLS protocol) may serve as the backup forwarding card for primary forwarding cards supporting MPLS in its own quadrant (e.g., forwarding cards 548a and 548d) as well as for primary forwarding cards supporting MPLS in quadrant 1 (e.g., forwarding card 546c) or all quadrants (e.g., forwarding card 550a in quadrant 3 and forwarding card 552a in quadrant 4). Even with this flexibility, to provide sufficient redundancy, multiple backup modules supporting the same protocol may be used, especially where a large number of primary modules support one protocol.

As previously discussed, each port on a universal port card may be connected to an external network connection, for example, an optical fiber transmitting data according to the SONET protocol. Each external network connection may provide multiple streams or paths and each stream or path may include data being transmitted according to a different protocol over SONET. For example, one path may include data being transmitted according to ATM over SONET while another path may include data being transmitted according to MPLS over SONET. The cross-connection cards may be programmed (as described below) to transmit protocol specific data (e.g., ATM, MPLS, IP, Frame Relay) from ports on universal port cards within their quadrants to forwarding cards within any quadrant that support the specific protocol. Because the traffic management chips on the forwarding cards provide protocol-independent addresses to be used by switch fabric

cards 570a-570b, the switch fabric cards may transmit data between any of the forwarding cards regardless of the underlying protocol.

Alternatively, the network manager may dedicate each quadrant to a specific protocol by putting forwarding cards in each quadrant according to the protocol they support. Within each quadrant then, one forwarding card may be a backup card for each of the other forwarding cards (1:N, for network device 540, 1:4). Protocol specific data received from ports or paths on ports on universal port cards within any quadrant may then be forwarded by one or more cross-connection cards to forwarding cards within the protocol specific quadrant. For instance, quadrant 1 may include forwarding cards for processing data transmissions using the ATM protocol, quadrant 2 may include forwarding cards for processing data transmissions using the IP protocol, quadrant 3 may include forwarding cards for processing data transmissions using the MPLS protocol and quadrant 4 may be used for processing data transmissions using the Frame Relay protocol. ATM data received on a port path is then transmitted by one or more cross-connection cards to a forwarding card in quadrant 1, while MPLS data received on another path on that same port or on a path in another port is transmitted by one or more cross-connection cards to a forwarding card in quadrant 3.

Policy Based Provisioning:

Unlike the switch fabric card, the cross-connection card does not examine header information in a payload to determine where to send the data. Instead, the cross-connection card is programmed to transmit payloads, for example, SONET frames, between a particular serial line on a universal port card port and a particular serial line on a forwarding card port regardless of the information in the payload. As a result, one port card serial line and one forwarding card serial line will transmit data to each other through the cross-connection card until that programmed connection is changed.

In one embodiment, connections established through a path table and service endpoint table (SET) in a configuration database are passed to path managers on port cards and service endpoint managers (SEMs) on forwarding cards, respectively. The path

managers and service endpoint managers then communicate with a cross-connect manager (CCM) on the cross-connection card in their quadrant to provide connection information. The CCM uses the connection information to generate a connection program table that is used by one or more components (e.g., a TSE chip 563) to program internal connection paths through the cross-connection card.

Typically, connections are fixed or are generated according to a predetermined map with a fixed set of rules. Unfortunately, a fixed set of rules may not provide flexibility for future network device changes or the different needs of different users / customers. Instead, within network device 540, each time a user wishes to enable / configure a path on a port on a universal port card, a Policy Provisioning Manager (PPM) 599 (Fig. 37) executing on central processor 542 selects the forwarding card port to which the port card port will be connected based on a configurable provisioning policy (PP) 603 in configuration database 42. The configurable provisioning policy may take into consideration many factors such as available system resources, balancing those resources and quality of service. Similar to other programs and files stored within the configuration database of computer system 10 described above, the provisioning policy may be modified while network device 540 is running to allow to policy to be changed according to a user's changing needs or changing network device system requirements.

When a user connects an external network connection to a particular port on a universal port card, the user notifies the NMS as to which port on which universal port card should be enabled, which path or paths should be enabled, and the number of time slots in each path. The user may also notify the NMS as to a new path and its number of time slots on an already enabled port that was not fully utilized or the user may notify the NMS of a modification to one or more paths on already enabled ports and the number of time slots required for that path or paths. With this information, the NMS fills in a Path table 600 (Figs. 37 and 38) and partially fills in a Service Endpoint Table (SET) 76' (Figs. 37 and 39).

When a record in the path table is filled in, the configuration database sends an active query notification to a path manager (e.g., path manager 597) executing on a universal port card (e.g., port card 554a) corresponding to the universal port card port LID (e.g., port 1231, Fig. 38) in the path table record (e.g., record 602).

Leaving some fields in the SET blank or assigning a particular value (e.g., zero), causes the configuration database to send an active query notification to Policy Provisioning Manager (PPM) 599. The PPM then determines -- using provisioning policy 603 -- which forwarding card (FC) port or ports to assign to the new path or paths. For example, the PPM may first compare the new path's requirements, including its protocol (e.g., ATM over SONET), the number of time slots, the number of virtual circuits and virtual circuit scheduling restrictions, to the available forwarding card resources in the quadrant containing the universal port card port and path. The PPM also takes other factors into consideration including quality of service, for example, redundancy requirements or dedicated resource requirements, and balancing resource usage (i.e., load balancing) evenly within a quadrant.

As an example, a user connects SONET optical fiber 576a (Fig. 36) to port 571a on universal port card 554a and wants to enable a path with three time slots (i.e., STS-3c). The NMS assigns a path LID number (e.g., path LID 1666) and fills in a record (e.g., row 602) in Path Table 600 to include path LID 1666, a universal port card port LID (e.g., UP port LID 1231) previously assigned by the NMS and retrieved from the Logical to Physical Port Table, the first time slot (e.g., time slot 4) in the SONET stream corresponding with the path and the total number of time slots – in this example, 3 -- in the path. Other information may also be filled into Path Table 600.

The NMS also partially fills in a record (e.g., row 604) in SET 76' by filling in the quadrant number – in this example, 1 – and the assigned path LID 1666 and by assigning a service endpoint number 878. The SET table also includes other fields, for example, a forwarding card LID field 606, a forwarding card slice 608 (i.e., port) and a forwarding

card serial line 610. In one embodiment, the NMS fills in these fields with a particular value (e.g., zero), and in another embodiment, the NMS leaves these fields blank.

In either case, the particular value or a blank field causes the configuration database to send an active query notice to the PPM indicating a new path LID, quadrant number and service endpoint number. It is up to the PPM to decide which forwarding card, slice (i.e., payload extractor chip) and time slot (i.e., port) to assign to the new universal port card path. Once decided, the PPM fills in the SET Table fields. Since the user and NMS do not completely fill in the SET record, this may be referred to as a "self-completing configuration record." Self-completing configuration records reduce the administrative workload of provisioning a network.

The SET and path table records may be automatically copied to persistent storage 21 to insure that if network device 540 is re-booted these configuration records are maintained. If the network device shuts down prior to the PPM filling in the SET record fields and having those fields saved in persistent storage, when the network device is rebooted, the SET will still include blank fields or fields with particular values which will cause the configuration database to again send an active query to the PPM.

When the forwarding card LID (e.g., 1667) corresponding, for example, to forwarding card 546c, is filled into the SET table, the configuration database sends an active query notification to an SEM (e.g., SEM 96i) executing on that forwarding card and corresponding to the assigned slice and/or time slots. The active query notifies the SEM of the newly assigned service endpoint number (e.g., SE 878) and the forwarding card slice (e.g., payload extractor 582a) and time slots (i.e., 3 time slots from one of the serial line inputs to payload extractor 582a) dedicated to the new path.

Path manager 597 and SEM 96i both send connection information to a cross-connection manager 605 executing on cross-connection card 562a – the cross-connection card within their quadrant. The CCM uses the connection information to generate a connection program table 601 and uses this table to program internal connections through one or

more components (e.g., a TSE chip 563) on the cross-connection card. Once programmed, cross-connection card 562a transmits data between new path LID 1666 on SONET fiber 576a connected to port 571a on universal port card 554a and the serial line input to payload extractor 582a on forwarding card 546c.

An active query notification is also sent to NMS database 61, and the NMS then displays the new system configuration to the user.

Alternatively, the user may choose which forwarding card to assign to the new path and notify the NMS. The NMS would then fill in the forwarding card LID in the SET, and the PPM would only determine which time slots and slice within the forwarding card to assign.

In the description above, when the PPM is notified of a new path, it compares the requirements of the new path to the available / unused forwarding card resources. If the necessary resources are not available, the PPM may signal an error. Alternatively, the PPM could move existing forwarding card resources to make the necessary forwarding card resources available for the new path. For example, if no payload extractor chip is completely available in the entire quadrant, one path requiring only one time slot is assigned to payload extractor chip 582a and a new path requires forty-eight time slots, the one path assigned to payload extractor chip 582a may be moved to another payload extractor chip, for example, payload extractor chip 582b that has at least one time slot available and the new path may be assigned all of the time slots on payload extractor chip 582a. Moving the existing path is accomplished by having the PPM modify an existing SET record. The new path is configured as described above.

Moving existing paths may result in some service disruption. To avoid this, the provisioning policy may include certain guidelines to hypothesize about future growth. For example, the policy may require small paths – for example, three or less time slots – to be assigned to payload extractor chips that already have some paths assigned instead of to completely unassigned payload extractor chips to provide a higher likelihood that

forwarding card resources will be available for large paths – for example, sixteen or more time slots -- added in the future.

Multi-Layer Network Device in One Telco Rack:

Referring again to Fig. 35, in one embodiment, each universal port card includes four ports, each of which is capable of being connected to an OC-48 SONET fiber. Since an OC-48 SONET fiber is capable of transferring data at 2.5 Giga bits per second (Gbps), each universal port card is capable of transferring data at 10 Gbps ($4 \times 2.5 = 10$). With eight port cards per quadrant, the cross-connection card must be capable of transferring data at 80 Gbps. Typically, however, the eight port cards will be 1:1 redundant and only transfer 40 Gbps. In one embodiment, each forwarding card is capable of transferring 10 Gbps, and with five forwarding cards per quadrant, the switch fabric cards must be capable of transferring data at 200 Gbps. Typically, however, the five forwarding cards will be 1:N redundant and only transfer data at 40 Gbps. With four quadrants and full redundancy (1:1 for port cards and 1:N for forwarding cards), network device 540 is capable of transferring data at 160 Gbps.

In other embodiments, each port card includes one port capable of being connected to an OC-192 SONET fiber. Since OC-192 SONET fibers are capable of transferring data at 10 Gbps, a fully redundant network device 540 is again capable of transferring 160 Gbps. In the embodiment employing one OC-192 connection per port card, each port card may include one hundred and ninety-two logical DS3 connections using sub-rate data multiplexing (SDRM). In addition, each port card may differ in its number and type of ports to provide more or less data through put. As previously mentioned, ports other than SONET ports may be provided, for example, Ethernet ports, Plesiochronous Digital Hierarchy ports (i.e., DS0, DS1, DS3, E0, E1, E3, J0, J1, J3) and Synchronous Digital Hierarchy (SDH) ports (i.e., STM1, STM4, STM16, STM64).

The universal port cards and cross-connect cards in each quadrant are in effect a physical layer switch, and the forwarding cards and switch fabric cards are effectively an upper layer switch. Prior systems have packaged these two switches into separate network

devices. One reason for this is the large number of signals that need to be routed. Taken separately, each cross-connect card 562a-562b, 564a-564b, 566a-566b and 568a-568b is essentially a switch fabric or mesh allowing switching between any path on any universal port card to any serial input line on any forwarding card in its quadrant and each switch fabric card 570a-570b allows switching between any paths on any forwarding cards. Approximately six thousand, seven hundred and twenty etches are required to support a 200 Gbps switch fabric, and about eight hundred and thirty-two etches are required to support an 80 Gbps cross-connect. Combining such high capacity multi-layer switches into one network device in a single telco rack (seven feet by nineteen inches by 24 inches) has not been thought possible by those skilled in the art of telecommunications network devices.

To fit network device 540 into a single telco rack, dual mid-planes are used. All of the functional printed circuit boards connect to at least one of the mid-planes, and the switch fabric cards and certain control cards connect to both mid-planes thereby providing connections between the two mid-planes. In addition, to efficiently utilize routing resources, instead of providing a single cross-connection card, the cross-connection functionality is separated into four cross-connection cards – one for each quadrant – (as shown in Fig. 35). Further, routing through the lower mid-plane is improved by flipping the forwarding cards and cross-connection cards in the bottom half of the front of the chassis upside down to be the mirror image of the forwarding cards and cross-connection cards in the top of the front half of the chassis.

Referring to Fig. 40, a network device 540 is packaged in a box 619 conforming to the telco standard rack of seven feet in height, nineteen inches in width and 24 inches in depth. Referring also to Figs. 41a-41c, a chassis 620 within box 619 provides support for forwarding cards 546a-546e, 548a-548e, 550a-550e and 552a-552e, universal port cards 554a-554h, 556a-556h, 558a-558h and 560a-560h, and cross-connection cards 562a-562b, 564a-564b, 566a-566b and 568a-568b. As is typical of telco network devices, the forwarding cards (FC) are located in the front portion of the chassis where network administrators may easily add and remove these cards from the box, and the universal

port cards (UP) are located in the back portion of the chassis where external network attachments / cables may be easily connected.

The chassis also supports switch fabric cards 570a and 570b. As shown, each switch fabric card may include multiple switch fabric (SF) cards and a switch scheduler (SS) card. In addition, the chassis supports multiple central processor cards (542 and 543, Fig. 35). Instead of having a single central processor card, the external control functions and the internal control functions may be separated onto different cards as described in U.S. Patent Application Serial Number ___, filed May 20, 2000 and entitled "Functional Separation of Internal and External Controls in Network Devices", which is hereby incorporated herein by reference. As shown, the chassis may support internal control (IC) processor cards 542a and 543a and external control (EC) processor cards 542b and 543b. Auxiliary processor (AP) cards 542c and 543c are provided for future expansion to allow more external control cards to be added, for example, to handle new upper layer protocols. In addition, a management interface (MI) card 621 for connecting to an external network management system (62, Fig. 35) is also provided.

The chassis also support two mid-plane printed circuit boards 622a and 622b (Fig. 41c) located toward the middle of chassis 620. Mid-plane 622a is located in the top portion of chassis 620 and is connected to quadrant 1 and 2 forwarding cards 546a-546e and 548a-548e, universal port cards 554a-554h and 556a-556h, and cross-connection cards 562a-562b and 564a-564b. Similarly, mid-plane 622b is located in the bottom portion of chassis 620 and is connected to quadrant 3 and 4 forwarding cards 550a-550e and 552a-552e, universal port cards 558a-558h and 560a-560h, and cross-connection cards 566a-566b and 568a-568b. Through each mid-plane, the cross-connection card in each quadrant may transfer network packets between any of the universal port cards in its quadrant and any of the forwarding cards in its quadrant. In addition, through mid-plane 622a the cross-connection cards in quadrants 1 and 2 may be connected to allow for transfer of network packets between any forwarding cards and port cards in quadrants 1 and 2, and through mid-plane 622b the cross-connection cards in quadrants 3 and 4 may

be connected to allow for transfer of network packets between any forwarding cards and port cards in quadrants 3 and 4.

Mid-plane 622a is also connected to external control processor cards 542b and 543b and management interface card 621. Mid-plane 622b is also connected to auxiliary processor cards 542c and 543c.

Switch fabric cards 570a and 570b are located in the back portion of chassis 620, approximately mid-way between the top and bottom of the chassis. The switch fabric cards are connected to both mid-planes 622a and 622b to allow the switch fabric cards to transfer signals between any of the forwarding cards in any quadrant. In addition, the cross-connection cards in quadrants 1 and 2 may be connected through the mid-planes and switch fabric cards to the cross-connection cards in quadrants 3 and 4 to enable network packets to be transferred between any universal port card and any forwarding card.

To provide for better routing efficiency through mid-plane 622b, forwarding cards 550a-550e and 552a-552e and cross-connection cards 566a-566b and 568a-568b in quadrants 3 and 4, located in the bottom portion of the chassis, are flipped over when plugged into mid-plane 622b. This permits the switch fabric interface 589a-589n on each of the lower forwarding cards to be oriented nearest the switch fabric cards and the cross-connection interface 582a-582n on each of the lower forwarding cards to be oriented nearest the cross-connection cards in quadrants 3 and 4. This orientation avoids having to cross switch fabric and cross-connection etches in mid-plane 622b.

Typically, airflow for cooling a network device is brought in at the bottom of the device and released at the top of the device. For example, in the back portion of chassis 620, a fan tray (FT) 626 pulls air into the device from the bottom portion of the device and a fan tray 628 blows air out of the top portion of the device. When the lower forwarding cards are flipped over, the airflow / cooling pattern is reversed. To accommodate this reversal, fan trays 630 and 632 pull air into the middle portion of the device and then fan trays 634

and 636 pull the air upwards and downwards, respectively, and blow the heated air out the top and bottom of the device, respectively.

The quadrant 3 and 4 universal port cards 558a-558h and 560a-560h may also be flipped over to orient the port card's cross-connection interface nearest the cross-connection cards and more efficiently use the routing resources. It is preferred, however, not to flip the universal port cards for serviceability reasons and airflow issues. The network managers at the telco site expect network attachments / cables to be in a certain pattern. Reversing this pattern could cause confusion in a large telco site with many different types of network devices. Also, flipping the port cards will change the airflow and cooling pattern and require a similar airflow pattern and fan tray configuration as implemented in the front of the chassis. However, with the switch fabric and internal control processor cards in the middle of the back portion of the chassis, it may be impossible to implement this fan tray configuration.

Referring to Fig. 42, mid-plane 622a includes connectors 638 mounted on the back side of the mid-plane ("back mounted") for the management interface card, connectors 640a-640d mounted on the front side of the mid-plane ("front mounted") for the quadrant 1 and 2 cross-connection cards, and front mounted connectors 642a-642b for the external control processor cards. Multiple connectors may be used for each card. Mid-plane 622a also includes back mounted connectors 644a-644p for the quadrant 1 and 2 universal port cards and front mounted connectors 646a-646j for the quadrant 1 and 2 forwarding cards.

Both mid-planes 622a and 622b include back mounted connectors 648a-648d for the switch fabric cards and back mounted connectors 650a-650d for the internal control cards. Mid-plane 622b further includes front, reverse mounted connectors 652a-652j for the quadrant 3 and 4 forwarding cards and back mounted connectors 654a-654p for the quadrant 3 and 4 universal port cards. In addition, mid-plane 622b also includes front, reverse mounted connectors 656a-656d for the quadrant 3 and 4 cross-connection cards and front mounted connectors 658a-658b for the auxiliary processor cards.

Combining both physical layer switch/router subsystems and upper layer switch/router subsystems in one network device allows for intelligent layer 1 switching. For example, the network device may be used to establish dynamic network connections on the layer 1 network to better utilize resources as service subscriptions change. In addition, network management is greatly simplified since the layer 1 and multiple upper layer networks may be managed by the same network management system and grooming fees are eliminated. Combining the physical layer switch/router and upper layer switch/routers into a network device that fits into one telco rack provides a less expensive network device and saves valuable telco site space.

Splitting the cross-connection function into four separate cards / quadrants enables the cross-connection routing requirements to be spread between the two mid-planes and alleviates the need to route cross-connection signals through the center of the device where the switch fabric is routed. In addition, segmenting the cross-connection function into multiple, independent subsystems allows customers / network managers to add functionality to network device 540 in pieces and in accordance with network service subscriptions. When a network device is first installed, a network manager may need only a few port cards and forwarding cards to service network customers. The modularity of network device 540 allows the network manager to purchase and install only one cross-connection card and the required number of port and forwarding cards. As the network becomes more subscribed, the network manager may add forwarding cards and port cards and eventually additional cross-connection cards. Since network devices are often very expensive, this modularity allows network managers to spread the cost of the system out in accordance with new service requests. The fees paid by customers to the network manager for the new services can then be applied to the cost of the new cards.

Although the embodiment describes the use of two mid-planes, it should be understood that more than two mid-planes may be used. Similarly, although the embodiment described flipped / reversed the forwarding cards and cross-connection cards in the lower

half of the chassis, alternatively, the forwarding cards and cross-connection cards in the upper half of the chassis could be flipped.

Distributed Switch Fabric:

A network device having a distributed switch fabric locates a portion of the switch fabric functionality on cards separate from the remaining / central switch fabric functionality. For example, a portion of the switch fabric may be distributed on each forwarding card. There are a number of difficulties associated with distributing a portion of the switch fabric. For instance, distributing the switch fabric makes mid-plane / back-plane routing more difficult which further increases the difficulty of fitting the network device into one telco rack, switch fabric redundancy and timing are also made more difficult, valuable forwarding card space must be allocated for switch fabric components and the cost of each forwarding card is increased. However, since the entire switch fabric need not be included in a minimally configured network device, the cost of the minimal configuration is reduced allowing network service providers to more quickly recover the initial cost of the device. As new services are requested, additional functionality, including both forwarding cards (with additional switch fabric functionality) and universal port cards may be added to the network device to handle the new requests, and the fees for the new services may be applied to the cost of the additional functionality. Consequently, the cost of the network device more closely tracks the service fees received by network providers.

Referring again to Fig. 36, as described above, each forwarding card (e.g., 546c) includes traffic management chips (e.g., 588a-588n and 590a-590b) that ensure high priority network data / traffic (e.g., voice) is transferred faster than lower priority traffic (e.g., e-mail). Each forwarding card also includes switch fabric interface (SFIF) chips (e.g., 589a-589n) that transfer network data between the traffic management chips and the switch fabric cards 570a-570b.

Referring also to Fig. 43, forwarding card 546c includes traffic management (TM) chips 588n and 590a and SFIF chips 589, and forwarding card 550a includes traffic management chips 659a and 659b and SFIF chips 660. (Fig. 43 includes only two

etches for the reference timing signals from both the primary and redundant central timing subsystems must be matched. Compounding this with a fast clock signal and low skew component requirements makes distributing the timing very difficult.

The network device of the present invention, though difficult, includes two synchronized central timing subsystems (CTS) 673 (one is shown in Fig. 43). The etch lengths of reference timing signals from both central timing subsystems are matched to within, for example, +/- 50 mils, and both central timing subsystems distribute only reference start of segment (SOS) signals to a local timing subsystem (LTS) 665 on each forwarding card and switch fabric card. The LTSs use the SOS reference signals to generate both an SOS signal and a higher frequency clock signal. This adds components and complexity to the LTSs, however, distributing only the SOS reference signals and not both the SOS and clock reference signals significantly reduces the number of reference timing signals that must be routed across the mid-plane on matched etch lengths.

Both electro-magnetic radiation and electro-physical limitations prevent the 200 MHz reference clock signal from being widely distributed as required in a network device implementing distributed switch fabric subsystems. Such a fast reference clock increases the overall noise level generated by the network device and wide distribution may cause the network device to exceed Electro-Magnetic Interference (EMI) limitations. Clock errors are often measured as a percentage of the clock period, the smaller the clock period (5ns for a 200 MHz clock), the larger the percentage of error a small skew can cause. For example, a skew of 3ns represents a 60% error for a 5ns clock period but only a 7.5% error for a 40ns clock period. Higher frequency clock signals (e.g., 200 MHz) are susceptible to noise error and clock skew. The SOS signal has a larger clock period than the reference clock signal (40ns versus 5ns) and, thus, is less susceptible to noise error and reduces the percentage of error resulting from clock skew.

As previously mentioned, the network device may include redundant switch fabric cards 570a and 570b (Fig. 36) and as described above with reference to Fig. 43, each switch fabric card 570a and 570b may include a control card and four or more data cards.

Central Timing Subsystem (CTS):

Referring to Fig. 45, central timing subsystem (CTS) 673 includes a voltage controlled crystal oscillator (VCXO) 676 that generates a 25MHz reference SOS signal 678. The SOS signal must be distributed to each of the local timing subsystems (LTSs) and is, thus, sent to a first level clock driver 680 and then to second level clock drivers 682a-682d that output reference SOS signals SFC_BENCH_FB and SFC_REF1 – SFC_REFn. SFC_BENCH_FB is a local feedback signal returned to the input of the CTS. One of SFC_REF1 - SFC_REFn is sent to each LTS, the other CTS, which receives it on SFC_SYNC, and one is routed over a mid-plane and returned as a feedback signal SFC_FB to the input of the CTS that generated it. Additional levels of clock drivers may be added as the number of necessary reference SOS signals increases.

VCXO 676 may be a VF596ES50 25MHz LVPECL available from Conner-Winfield. Positive Emitter Coupled Logic (PECL) is preferred over Transistor-Transistor Logic (TTL) for its lower skew properties. In addition, though it requires two etches to transfer a single clock reference -- significantly increasing routing resources --, differential PECL is preferred over PECL for its lower skew properties and high noise immunity. The clock drivers are also differential PECL and may be one to ten (1:10) MC100 LVEP111 clock drivers available from On Semiconductor. A test header 681 may be connected to clock driver 680 to allow a test clock to be input into the system.

Hardware control logic 684 determines (as described below) whether the CTS is the master or slave, and hardware control logic 684 is connected to a multiplexor (MUX) 686 to select between a predetermined voltage input (i.e., master voltage input) 688a and a slave VCXO voltage input 688b. When the CTS is the master, hardware control logic 684 selects predetermined voltage input 688a from discrete bias circuit 690 and slave VCXO voltage input 688b is ignored. The predetermined voltage input causes VCXO 676 to generate a constant 25MHz SOS signal; that is, the VCXO operates as a simple oscillator.

Hardware control logic may be implemented in a field programmable gate array (FPGA) or a programmable logic device (PLD). MUX 686 may be a 74CBTLV3257 FET 2:1 MUX available from Texas Instruments.

When the CTS is the slave, hardware control logic 684 selects slave VCXO voltage signal 688b. This provides a variable voltage level to the VCXO that causes the output of the VCXO to track or follow the SOS reference signal from the master CTS. Referring still to Fig. 45, the CTS receives the SOS reference signal from the other CTS on SFC_SYNC. Since this is a differential PECL signal, it is first passed through a differential PECL to TTL translator 692 before being sent to MUX 697a within dual MUX 694. In addition, two feedback signals from the CTS itself are supplied as inputs to the CTS. The first feedback signal SFC_FB is an output signal (e.g., one of SFC_REF1-SFC_REFn) from the CTS itself which has been sent out to the mid-plane and routed back to the switch fabric control card. This is done so that the feedback signal used by the CTS experiences identical conditions as the reference SOS signal delivered to the LTSs and skew is minimized. The second feedback signal SFC_BENCH_FB is a local signal from the output of the CTS, for example, clock driver 682a. SFC_BENCH_FB may be used as the feedback signal in a test mode, for example, when the control card is not plugged into the network device chassis and SFC_SB is unavailable. SFC_BENCH_FB and SFC_FB are also differential PECL signals and must be sent through translators 693 and 692, respectively, prior to being sent to MUX 697b within dual MUX 694. Hardware control logic 684 selects which inputs are used by MUX 694 by asserting signals on REF_SEL(1:0) and FB_SEL(1:0). In regular use, inputs 696a and 696b from translator 692 are selected. In test modes, grounded inputs 695a, test headers 695b or local feedback signal 698 from translator 693 may be selected. Also in regular use (and in test modes where a clock signal is not inserted through the test headers), copies of the selected input signals are provided on the test headers.

The reference output 700a and the feedback output 700b are then sent from the MUX to phase detector circuit 702. The phase detector compares the rising edge of the two input signals to determine the magnitude of any phase shift between the two. The phase

detector then generates variable voltage pulses on outputs 704a and 704b representing the magnitude of the phase shift. The phase detector outputs are used by discrete logic circuit 706 to generate a voltage on a slave VCXO voltage signal 688b representing the magnitude of the phase shift. The voltage is used to speed up or slow down (i.e., change the phase of) the VCXO's output SOS signal to allow the output SOS signal to track any phase change in the reference SOS signal from the other CTS (i.e., SFC_SYNC). The discrete logic components implement filters that determine how quickly or slowly the VCXO's output will track the change in phase detected on the reference signal. The combination of the dual MUX, phase detector, discrete logic, VCXO, clock drivers and feedback signal forms a phase locked loop (PLL) circuit allowing the slave CTS to synchronize its reference SOS signal to the master CTS reference SOS signal. MUX 686 and discrete bias circuit 690 are not found in phase locked loop circuits.

The phase detector circuit may be implemented in a programmable logic device (PLD), for example a MACH4LV-32 available from Lattice/Vantis Semiconductor. Dual MUX 694 may be implemented in the same PLD. Preferably, however, dual MUX 694 is an SN74CBTLV3253 available from Texas Instruments, which has better skew properties than the PLD. The differential PECL to TTL translators may be MC100EPT23 dual differential PECL/TTL translators available from On Semiconductor.

Since quick, large phase shifts in the reference signal are likely to be the results of failures, the discrete logic implements a filter, and for any detected phase shift, only small incremental changes over time are made to the voltage provided on slave VCXO control signal 688b. As one example, if the reference signal from the master CTS dies, the slave VCXO control signal 688b only changes phase slowly over time meaning that the VCXO will continue to provide a reference SOS signal. If the reference signal from the master CTS is suddenly returned, the slave VCXO control signal 688b again only changes phase slowly over time to cause the VCXO signal to re-synchronize with the reference signal from the master CTS. This is a significant improvement over distributing a clock signal directly to components that use the signal because, in the case of direct clock distribution, if one clock signal dies (e.g., broken wire), then the

components connected to that signal stop functioning causing the entire switch fabric to fail.

Slow phase changes on the reference SOS signals from both the master and slave CTSs are also important when LTSs switch over from using the master CTS reference signal to using the slave CTS reference signal. For example, if the reference SOS signal from the master CTS dies or other problems are detected (e.g., a clock driver dies), then the slave CTS switches over to become the master CTS and each of the LTSs begin using the slave CTS' reference SOS signal. For these reasons, it is important that the slave CTS reference SOS signal be synchronized to the master reference signal but not quickly follow large phase shifts in the master reference signal.

It is not necessary for every LTS to use the reference SOS signals from the same CTS. In fact, some LTSs may use reference SOS signals from the master CTS while one or more are using the reference SOS signals from the slave CTS. In general, this is a transitional state prior to or during switch over. For example, one or more LTSs may start using the slave CTS's reference SOS signal prior to the slave CTS switching over to become the master CTS.

It is important for both the CTSs and the LTSs to monitor the activity of the reference SOS signals from both CTSs such that if there is a problem with one, the LTSs can begin using the other SOS signal immediately and/or the slave CTS can quickly become master. Reference output signal 700a – the translated reference SOS signal sent from the other CTS and received on SFC_SYNC -- is sent to an activity detector circuit 708. The activity detector circuit determines whether the signal is active – that is, whether the signal is “stuck at” logic 1 or logic 0. If the signal is not active (i.e., stuck at logic 1 or 0), the activity detector sends a signal 683a to hardware control logic 684 indicating that the signal died. The hardware control logic may immediately select input 688a to MUX 686 to change the CTS from slave to master. The hardware control logic also sends an interrupt to a local processor 710 and software being executed by the processor detects

the interrupt. Hardware control allows the CTS switch over to happen very quickly before a bad clock signal can disrupt the system.

Similarly, an activity detector 709 monitors the output of the first level clock driver 680 regardless of whether the CTS is master or slave. Instead, the output of one the second level clock drivers could be monitored, however, a failure of a different second level clock will not be detected. SFC_REF_ACTIVITY is sent from the first level clock driver to differential PECL to TTL translator 693 and then as FABRIC_REF_ACTIVITY to activity detector 709. If activity detector 709 determines that the signal is not active, which may indicate that the clock driver, oscillator or other component(s) within the CTS have failed, then it sends a signal 683b to the hardware control logic. The hardware control logic asserts KILL_CLKTREE to stop the clock drivers from sending any signals and notifies a processor chip 710 on the switch fabric control card through an interrupt. Software being executed by the processor chip detects the interrupt. The slave CTS activity detector 708 detects a dead signal from the master CTS either before or after the hardware control logic sends KILL_CLKTREE and asserts error signal 683a to cause the hardware control logic to change the input selection on MUX 686 from 688b to 688a to become the master CTS. As described below, the LTSs also detect a dead signal from the master CTS either before or after the hardware control logic sends KILL_CLKTREE and switch over to the reference SOS signal from the slave CTS either before or after the slave CTS switches over to become the master.

As previously mentioned, in the past, a separate, common clock selection signal or etch was sent to each card in the network device to indicate whether to use the master or slave clock reference signal. This approach required significant routing resources, was under software control and resulted in every load selecting the same source at any given time. Hence, if a clock signal problem was detected, components had to wait for the software to change the separate clock selection signal before beginning to use the standby clock signal and all components (i.e., loads) were always locked to the same source. This delay can cause data corruption errors, switch fabric failure and a network device crash.

Forcing a constant logic one or zero (i.e., “killing”) clock signals from a failed source and having hardware in each LTS and CTS detect inactive (i.e., “dead” or stuck at logic one or zero) signals allows the hardware to quickly begin using the standby clock without the need for software intervention. In addition, if only one clock driver (e.g., 682b) dies in the master CTS, LTSs receiving output signals from that clock driver may immediately begin using signals from the slave CTS clock driver while the other LTSs continue to use the master CTS. Interrupts to the processor from each of the LTSs connected to the failed master CTS clock driver allow software, specifically the SRM, to detect the failure and initiate a switch over of the slave CTS to the master CTS. The software may also override the hardware control and force the LTSs to use the slave or master reference SOS signal.

When the slave CTS switches over to become the master CTS, the remaining switch fabric control card functionality (e.g., scheduler and cross-bar components) continue operating. The SRM (described above) decides – based on a failure policy -- whether to switch over from the primary switch fabric control card to the secondary switch fabric control card. There may be instances where the CTS on the secondary switch fabric control card operates as the master CTS for a period of time before the network device switches over from the primary to the secondary switch fabric control card, or instead, there may be instances where the CTS on the secondary switch fabric control card operates as the master CTS for a period of time and then the software directs the hardware control logic on both switch fabric control cards to switch back such that the CTS on the primary switch fabric control card is again master. Many variations are possible since the CTS is independent of the remaining functionality on the switch fabric control card.

Phase detector 702 also includes an out of lock detector that determines whether the magnitude of change between the reference signal and the feedback signal is larger than a predetermined threshold. When the CTS is the slave, this circuit detects errors that may not be detected by activity detector 708 such as where the reference SOS signal from the master CTS is failing but is not dead. If the magnitude of the phase change exceeds the

predetermined threshold, then the phase detector asserts an OOL signal to the hardware control logic. The hardware control logic may immediately change the input to MUX 686 to cause the slave CTS to switch over to Master CTS and send an interrupt to the processor, or the hardware control logic may only send the interrupt and wait for software (e.g., the SRM) to determine whether the slave CTS should switch over to master.

Master / Slave CTS Control:

In order to determine which CTS is the master and which is the slave, hardware control logic 684 implements a state machine. Each hardware control logic 684 sends an IM_THE_MASTER signal to the other hardware control logic 684 which is received as a YOU_THE_MASTER signal. If the IM_THE_MASTER signal -- and, hence, the received YOU_THE_MASTER signal -- is asserted then the CTS sending the signal is the master (and selects input 688a to MUX 686, Fig. 45) and the CTS receiving the signal is the slave (and selects input 688b to MUX 686). Each IM_THE_MASTER / YOU_THE_MASTER etch is pulled down to ground on the mid-planes such that if one of the CTSs is missing, the YOU_THE_MASTER signal received by the other CTS will be a logic 0 causing the receiving CTS to become the master. This situation may arise, for example, if a redundant control card including the CTS is not inserted within the network device. In addition, each of the hardware control logics receive SLOT_ID signals from pull-down/pull-up resistors on the chassis mid-plane indicating the slot in which the switch fabric control card is inserted.

Referring to Fig. 46, on power-up or after a system or card or CTS re-boot, the hardware control logic state machine begins in INIT/RESET state 0 and does not assert IM_THE_MASTER. If the SLOT_ID signals indicate that the control card is inserted in a preferred slot (e.g., slot one), and the received YOU_THE_MASTER is not asserted (i.e., 0), then the state machine transitions to the ONLINE state 3 and the hardware control logic asserts IM_THE_MASTER indicating its master status to the other CTS and selects input 688a to MUX 686. While in the ONLINE state 3, if a failure is detected or the software tells the hardware logic to switch over, the state machine enters the OFFLINE state 1 and the hardware control logic stops asserting IM_THE_MASTER and

asserts KILL_CLKTREE. While in the OFFLINE state 1, the software may reset or reboot the control card or just the CTS and force the state machine to enter the STANDBY state 2 as the slave CTS and the hardware control logic stops asserting KILL_CLKTREE and selects input 688b to MUX 686.

While in INIT/RESET state 0, if the SLOT_ID signals indicate that the control card is inserted in a non-preferred slot, (e.g., slot 0), then the state machine will enter STANDBY state 2 as the slave CTS and the hardware control logic will not assert IM_THE_MASTER and will select input 688b to MUX 686. While in INIT/RESET state 0, even if the SLOT_ID signals indicate that the control card is inserted in the preferred slot, if YOU_THE_MASTER is asserted, indicating that the other CTS is master, then the state machine transfers to STANDBY state 2. This situation may arise after a failure and recovery of the CTS in the preferred slot (e.g., reboot, reset or new control card).

While in the STANDBY state 2, if the YOU_THE_MASTER signal becomes zero (i.e., not asserted), indicating that the master CTS is no longer master, the state machine will transition to ONLINE state 3 and the hardware control logic will assert IM_THE_MASTER and select input 688a to MUX 686 to become master. While in ONLINE state 3, if the YOU_THE_MASTER signal is asserted and SLOT_ID indicating slot 0 the state machine enters STANDBY state 2 and the hardware control logic stops asserting IM_THE_MASTER and selects input 688b to MUX 686. This is the situation where the original master CTS is back up and running. The software may reset the state machine at any time or set the state machine to a particular state at any time.

Local Timing Subsystem:

Referring to Fig. 47, each local timing subsystem (LTS) 665 receives a reference SOS signal from each CTS on SFC_REFA and SFC_REFB. Since these are differential PECL signals, each is passed through a differential PECL to TTL translator 714a or 714b, respectively. A feedback signal SFC_FB is also passed from the LTS output to both translators 714a and 714b. The reference signal outputs 716a and 716b are fed into a first

The divider component may be a SY100EL34L divider by Synergy Semiconductor Corporation.

Reference signals 716a and 716b from translator 714a are also sent to activity detectors 734a and 734b, respectively. These activity detectors perform the same function as the activity detectors in the CTSs and assert error signals `ref_a_los` or `ref_b_los` to the LTS hardware control logic if reference signal 716a or 716b, respectively, die. On power-up, reset or reboot, a state machine (Fig. 48) within the LTS hardware control logic starts in INIT/RESET state 0. Arbitrarily, reference signal 716a is the first signal considered. If activity detector 734a is not sending an error signal (i.e., `ref_a_los` is 0), indicating that that reference signal 716a is active, then the state machine changes to REF_A state 2 and sends signals over REF_SEL(1:0) to MUX 717 to select reference input 716a and sends signals over FB_SEL(1:0) to MUX 720 to select feedback input 719a. While in INIT/RESET state 0, if `ref_a_los` is asserted, indicating no signal on reference 716a, and if `ref_b_los` is not asserted, indicating there is a signal on reference 716b, then the state machine changes to REF_B state 1 and changes REF_SEL(1:0) and FB_SEL(1:0) to select reference input 716b and feedback signal 719b.

While in REF_A state 2, if activity detector 734a detects a loss of reference signal 716a and asserts `ref_a_los`, the state machine will change to REF_B state 1 and change REF_SEL(1:0) and FB_SEL(1:0) to select inputs 716b and 719b. Similarly, while in REF_B state 1, if activity detector 734b detects a loss of signal 716b and asserts `ref_b_los`, the state machine will change to REF_A state 2 and change REF_SEL(1:0) and FB_SEL(1:0) to select inputs 716a and 719a. While in either REF_A state 2 or REF_B state 1, if both `ref_a_los` and `ref_b_los` are asserted, indicating that both reference SOS signals have died, the state machine changes back to INIT/RESET state 0 and change REF_SEL(1:0) and FB_SEL(1:0) to select no inputs or test inputs 736a and 736b or ground 738. For a period of time, the LTS will continue to supply a clock and SOS signal to the switch fabric components even though it is receiving no input reference signal.

When `ref_a_los` and/or `ref_b_los` are asserted, the LTS hardware control logic notifies its local processor 740 through an interrupt. The SRM will decide, based on a failure policy, what actions to take, including whether to switch over from the master to slave CTS. Just as the phase detector in the CTS sends an out of lock signal to the CTS hardware control logic, the phase detector 722 also sends an out of lock signal OOL to the LTS hardware control logic if the magnitude of the phase difference between the reference and feedback signals exceeds a predetermined threshold. If the LTS hardware receives an asserted OOL signal, it notifies its local processor (e.g., 740) through an interrupt. The SRM will decide based on a failure policy what actions to take.

Shared LTS Hardware:

In the embodiment described above, the switch fabric data cards are four independent cards. More data cards may also be used. Alternatively, all of the cross-bar components may be located on one card. As another alternative, half of the cross-bar components may be located on two separate cards and yet attached to the same network device faceplate and share certain components. A network device faceplate is something the network manager can unlatch and pull on to remove cards from the network device. Attaching two switch fabric data cards to the same faceplate effectively makes them one board since they are added to and removed from the network device together. Since they are effectively one board, they may share certain hardware as if all components were on one physical card. In one embodiment, they may share a processor, hardware control logic and activity detectors. This means that these components will be on one of the physical cards but not on the other and signals connected to the two cards allow activity detectors on the one card to monitor the reference and feedback signals on the other card and allow the hardware control logic on the one card to select the inputs for dual MUX 718 on the other card.

Scheduler:

Another difficulty with distributing a portion of the switch fabric functionality involves the scheduler component on the switch fabric control cards. In current systems, the entire switch fabric, including all EPP chips, are always present in a network device. Registers

in the scheduler component are configured on power-up or re-boot to indicate how many EPP chips are present in the current network device, and in one embodiment, the scheduler component detects an error and switches over to the redundant switch fabric control card when one of those EPP chips is no longer active. When the EPP chips are distributed to different cards (e.g., forwarding cards) within the network device, an EPP chip may be removed from a running network device when the printed circuit board on which it is located is removed ("hot swap", "hot removal") from the network device. To prevent the scheduler chip from detecting the missing EPP chip as an error (e.g., a CRC error) and switching over to the redundant switch fabric control card, prior to the board being removed from the network device, software running on the switch fabric control card re-configures the scheduler chip to disable the scheduler chip's links to the EPP chip that is being removed.

To accomplish this, a latch 547 (Fig. 40) on the faceplate of each of the printed circuit boards on which a distributed switch fabric is located is connected to a circuit 742 (Fig. 44) also on the printed circuit board that detects when the latch is released. When the latch is released, indicating that the board is going to be removed from the network device, circuit 742 sends a signal to a circuit 743 on both switch fabric control cards indicating that the forwarding card is about to be removed. Circuit 743 sends an interrupt to the local processor (e.g., 710, Fig. 45) on the switch fabric control card. Software (e.g., slave SRM) being executed by the local processor detects the interrupt and sends a notice to software (e.g., master SRM) being executed by the processor (e.g., 24, Fig. 1) on the network device centralized processor card (e.g., 12, Fig. 1, 542 or 543, Fig. 35). The master SRM sends a notice to the slave SRMs being executed by the processors on the switch fabric data cards and forwarding cards to indicate the removal of the forwarding card. The redundant forwarding card switches over to become a replacement for the failed primary forwarding card. The master SRM also sends a notice to the slave SRM on the cross-connection card (e.g., 562-562b, 564a-564b, 566a-566b, 568a-565b, Fig. 35) to re-configure the connections between the port cards (e.g., 554a-554h, 556a-556h, 558a-558h, 560a-560h, Fig. 35) and the redundant forwarding card. The slave SRM on the switch fabric control card re-configures the registers in the scheduler

component to disable the scheduler's links to the EPP chip on the forwarding card that's being removed from the network device. As a result, when the forwarding card is removed, the scheduler will not detect an error due to a missing EPP chip.

Similarly, when a forwarding card is added to the network device, circuit 742 detects the closing of the latch and sends an interrupt to the processor. The slave SRM running on the local processor sends a notice to the Master SRM which then sends a notice to the slave SRMs being executed by the processors on the switch fabric control cards, data cards and forwarding cards indicating the presence of the new forwarding card. The slave SRM on the cross-connection cards may be re-configured, and the slave SRM on the switch fabric control card may re-configure the scheduler chip to establish links with the new EPP chip to allow data to be transferred to the newly added forwarding card.

Switch Fabric Control Card Switch-Over:

Typically, the primary and secondary scheduler components receive the same inputs, maintain the same state and generate the same outputs. The EPP chips are connected to both scheduler chips but only respond to the master / primary scheduler chip. If the primary scheduler or control card experiences a failure a switch over is initiated to allow the secondary scheduler to become the primary. When the failed switch fabric control card is re-booted, re-initialized or replaced, it and its scheduler component serve as the secondary switch fabric control card and scheduler component.

In currently available systems, a complex sequence of steps is required to "refresh" or synchronize the state of the newly added scheduler component to the primary scheduler component and for many of these steps, network data transfer through the switch fabric is temporarily stopped (i.e., back pressure). Stopping network data transfer may affect the availability of the network device. When the switch fabric is centralized and all on one board or only a few boards or in its own box, the refresh steps are quickly completed by one or only a few processors limiting the amount of time that network data is not transferred. When the switch fabric includes distributed switch fabric subsystems, the processors that are local to each of the distributed switch fabric subsystems must take part

in the series of steps. This may increase the amount of time that data transfer is stopped further affecting network device availability.

To limit the amount of time that data transfer is stopped in a network device including distributed switch fabric subsystems, the local processors each set up for a refresh while data is still being transferred. Communications between the processors take place over the Ethernet bus (e.g., 32, Fig. 1, 544, Fig. 35) to avoid interrupting network data transfer. When all processors have indicated (over the Ethernet bus) that they are ready for the refresh, the processor on the master switch fabric control card stops data transfer and sends a refresh command to each of the processors on the forwarding cards and switch fabric cards. Since all processors are waiting to complete the refresh, it is quickly completed. Each processor notifies the processor on the master switch fabric control card that the refresh is complete, and when all processors have completed the refresh, the master switch fabric control card re-starts the data transfer.

During the time in which the data transfer is stopped, the buffers in the traffic management chips are used to store data coming from external network devices. It is important that the data transfer be complete quickly to avoid overrunning the traffic management chip buffers.

Since the switch over of the switch fabric control cards is very complex and requires that data transfer be stopped, even if briefly, it is important that the CTSs on each switch fabric control card be independent of the switch fabric functionality. This independence allows the master CTS to switch over to the slave CTS quickly and without interrupting the switch fabric functionality or data transmission.

As described above, locating the EPP chips and data slice chips of the switch fabric subsystem on the forwarding cards is difficult and against the teachings of a manufacturer of these components. However, locating these components on the forwarding cards allows the base network device – that is, the minimal configuration – to include only a necessary portion of the switching fabric reducing the cost of a minimally configured

network device. As additional forwarding cards are added to the minimal configuration - to track an increase in customer demand -- additional portions of the switch fabric are simultaneously added since a portion of the switch fabric is located on each forwarding card. Consequently, switch fabric growth tracks the growth in customer demands and fees. Also, typical network devices include 1:1 redundant switch fabric subsystems. However, as previously mentioned, the forwarding cards may be 1:N redundant and, thus, the distributed switch fabric on each forwarding card is also 1:N redundant further reducing the cost of a minimally configured network device.

External Network Data Transfer Timing:

In addition to internal switch fabric timing, a network device must also include external network data transfer timing to allow the network device to transfer network data synchronously with other network devices. Generally, multiple network devices in the same service provider site synchronize themselves to Building Integrated Timing Supply (BITS) lines provided by a network service provider. BITS lines are typically from highly accurate stratum two clock sources. In the United States, standard T1 BITS lines (2.048 MHz) are provided, and in Europe, standard E1 BITS lines (1.544 MHz) are provided. Typically, a network service provider provides two T1 lines or two E1 lines from different sources for redundancy. Alternatively, if there are no BITS lines or when network devices in different sites want to synchronously transfer data, one network device may extract a timing signal received on a port connected to the other network device and use that timing signal to synchronize its data transfers with the other network device.

Referring to Fig. 49, controller card 542b and redundant controller card 543b each include an external central timing subsystem (EX CTS) 750. Each EX CTS receives BITS lines 751 and provide BITS lines 752. In addition, each EX CTS receives a port timing signal 753 from each port card (554a-554h, 556a-556h, 558a-558h, 560a-560h, Fig. 35), and each EX CTS also receives an external timing reference signal 754 from itself and an external timing reference signal 755 from the other EX CTS.

One of the EX CTSs behaves as a master and the other EX CTS behaves as a slave. The master EX CTS may synchronize its output external reference timing signals to one of BITS lines 751 or one of the port timing signals 753, while the slave EX CTS synchronizes its output external reference timing signals to the received master external reference timing signal 755. Upon a master EX CTS failure, the slave EX CTS may automatically switch over to become the master EX CTS or software may upon an error or at any time force the slave EX CTS to switch over to become the master EX CTS.

An external reference timing signal from each EX CTS is sent to each external local timing subsystem (EX LTS) 756 on cards throughout the network device, and each EX LTS generates local external timing signals synchronized to one of the received external reference timing signals. Generally, external reference timing signals are sent only to cards including external data transfer functionality, for example, cross connection cards 562a-562b, 564a-564b, 566a-566b and 568a-568b (Fig. 35) and universal port cards 554a-554h, 556a-556h, 558a-558h, 560a-560h.

In network devices having multiple processor components, an additional central processor timing subsystem is needed to generate processor timing reference signals to allow the multiple processors to synchronize certain processes and functions. The addition of both external reference timing signals (primary and secondary) and processor timing reference signals (primary and secondary) require significant routing resources. In one embodiment of the invention, the EX CTSs embed a processor timing reference signal within each external timing reference signal to reduce the number of timing reference signals needed to be routed across the mid-plane(s). The external reference timing signals are then sent to EX LTSs on each card in the network device having a processor component, for example, cross connection cards 562a-562b, 564a-564b, 566a-566b, 568a-568b, universal port cards 554a-554h, 556a-556h, 558a-558h, 560a-560h, forwarding cards 546a-546e, 548a-548e, 550a-550e, 552a-552e, switch fabric cards 666, 667, 668a-668d, 669a-669d (Fig. 44) and both the internal controller cards 542a, 543a (Fig. 41b) and external controller cards 542b and 543b.

All of the EX LTSs extract out the embedded processor reference timing signal and send it to their local processor component. Only the cross-connection cards and port cards use the external reference timing signal to synchronize external network data transfers. As a result, the EX LTSs include extra circuitry not necessary to the function of cards not including external data transfer functionality, for example, forwarding cards, switch fabric cards and internal controller cards. The benefit of reducing the necessary routing resources, however, outweighs any disadvantage related to the excess circuitry. In addition, for the cards including external data transfer functionality, having one EX LTS that provides both local signals actually saves resources on those cards, and separate processor central timing subsystems are not necessary. Moreover, embedding the processor timing reference signal within the highly accurate, redundant external timing reference signal provides a highly accurate and redundant processor timing reference signal. Furthermore having a common EX LTS on each card allows access to the external timing signal for future modifications and having a common EX LTS, as opposed to different LTSs for each reference timing signal, results in less design time, less debug time, less risk, design re-use and simulation re-use.

Although the EX CTSs are described as being located on the external controllers 542b and 543b, similar to the switch fabric CTSs described above, the EX CTSs may be located on their own independent cards or on any other cards in the network device, for example, internal controllers 542a and 543a. In fact, one EX CTS could be located on an internal controller while the other is located on an external controller. Many variations are possible. In addition, just as the switch fabric CTSs may switch over from master to slave without affecting or requiring any other functionality on the local printed circuit board, the EX CTSs may also switch over from master to slave without affecting or requiring any other functionality on the local printed circuit board.

External Central Timing Subsystem (EX CTS):

Referring to Fig. 50, EX CTS 750 includes a T1/E1 framer/LIU 758 for receiving and terminating BITS signals 751 and for generating and sending BITS signals 752.

Although T1/E1 framer is shown in two separate boxes in Fig. 50, it is for convenience

only and may be the same circuit or component. In one embodiment, two 5431 T1/E1 Framer Line Interface Units (LIU) available from PMC-Sierra are used. The T1/E1 framer supplies 8KHz BITS_REF0 and BITS_REF1 signals and receives 8KHz BITS1_TXREF and BITS2_TXREF signals. A network administrator notifies NMS 60 (Fig. 35) as to whether the BITS signals are T1 or E1, and the NMS notifies software running on the network device. Through signals 761 from a local processor, hardware control logic 760 within the EX CTS is configured for T1 or E1 and sends an T1E1_MODE signal to the T1/E1 framer indicating T1 or E1 mode. The T1/E1 framer then forwards BITS_REF0 and BITS_REF1 to dual MUXs 762a and 762b.

Port timing signals 753 are also sent to dual MUXs 762a and 762b. The network administrator also notifies the NMS as to which timing reference signals should be used, the BITS lines or the port timing signals. The NMS again notifies software running on the network device and through signals 761, the local processor configures the hardware control logic. The hardware control logic then uses select signals 764a and 764b to select the appropriate output signals from the dual MUXs.

Activity detectors 766a and 766b provide status signals 767a and 767b to the hardware control logic indicating whether the PRI_REF signal and the SEC_REF signal are active or inactive (i.e., stuck at 1 or 0). The PRI_REF and SEC_REF signals are sent to a stratum 3 or stratum 3E timing module 768. Timing module 768 includes an internal MUX for selecting between the PRI_REF and SEC_REF signals, and the timing module receives control and status signals 769 from the hardware control logic indicating whether PRI_REF or SEC_REF should be used. If one of the activity detectors 766a or 766b indicates an inactive status to the hardware control logic, then the hardware control logic sends appropriate information over control and status signals 769 to cause the timing module to select the active one of PRI_REF or SEC_REF.

The timing module also includes an internal phase locked loop (PLL) circuit and an internal stratum 3 or 3E oscillator. The timing module synchronizes its output signal 770 to the selected input signal (PRI_REF or SEC_REF). The timing module may be an

MSTM-S3 available from Conner-Winfield or an ATIMe-s or ATIMe-3E available from TF systems. The hardware control logic, activity detectors and dual MUXs may be implemented in an FPGA. The timing module also includes a Free-run mode and a Hold-Over mode. When there is no input signal to synchronize to, the timing module enter a free-run mode and uses the internal oscillator to generate a clock output signal. If the signal being synchronized to is lost, then the timing module enters a hold-over mode and maintains the frequency of the last known clock output signal for a period of time.

The EX CTS 750 also receives an external timing reference signal from the other EX CTS on STRAT_SYNC 755 (one of STRAT_REF1-STRAT_REFN from the other EX CTS). STRAT_SYNC and output 770 from the timing module are sent to a MUX 772a. REF_SEL(1:0) selection signals are sent from the hardware control logic to MUX 772a to select STRAT_SYNC when the EX CTS is the slave and output 770 when the EX CTS is the master. When in a test mode, the hardware control logic may also select a test input from a test header 771a.

An activity detector 774a monitors the status of output 770 from the timing module and provides a status signal to the hardware control logic. Similarly, an activity detector 774b monitors the status of STRAT_SYNC and provides a status signal to the hardware control logic. When the EX CTS is master, if the hardware control logic receives an inactive status from activity detector 774a, then the hardware control logic automatically changes the REF_SEL signals to select STRAT_SYNC forcing the EX CTS to switch over and become the slave. When the EX CTS is slave, if the hardware control logic receives an inactive status from activity detector 774b, then the hardware control logic may automatically change the REF_SEL signals to select output 770 from the timing module forcing the EX CTS to switch over and become master.

A MUX 772b receives feedback signals from the EX CTS itself. BENCH_FB is an external timing reference signal from the EX CTS that is routed back to the MUX on the local printed circuit board. STRAT_FB 754 is an external timing reference signal from the EX CTS (one of STRAT_REF1-STRAT_REFN) that is routed onto the mid-plane(s)

and back onto the local printed circuit board such that is most closely resembles the external timing reference signals sent to the EX LTSs and the other EX CTS in order to minimize skew. The hardware control logic sends FB_SEL(1:0) signals to MUX 772b to select STRAT_FB in regular use or BENCH_FB or an input from a test header 771b in test mode.

The outputs of both MUX 772a and 772b are provided to a phase detector 776. The phase detector compares the rising edge of the two input signals to determine the magnitude of any phase shift between the two. The phase detector then generates variable voltage pulses on outputs 777a and 777b representing the magnitude of the phase shift. The phase detector outputs are used by discrete logic circuit 778 to generate a voltage on signal 779 representing the magnitude of the phase shift. The voltage is used to speed up or slow down (i.e., change the phase of) a VCXO 780 to allow the output signal 781 to track any phase change in the external timing reference signal received from the other EX CTS (i.e., STRAT_SYNC) or to allow the output signal 781 to track any phase change in the output signal 770 from the timing module. The discrete logic components implement a filter that determines how quickly or slowly the VCXO's output tracks the change in phase detected on the reference signal.

The phase detector circuit may be implemented in a programmable logic device (PLD).

The output 781 of the VCXO is sent to an External Reference Clock (ERC) circuit 782 which may also be implemented in a PLD. ERC_STRAT_SYNC is also sent to ERC 782 from the output of MUX 772a. When the EX CTS is the master, the ERC circuit generates the external timing reference signal 784 with an embedded processor timing reference signal, as described below, based on the output signal 781 and synchronous with ERC_STRAT_SYNC (corresponding to timing module output 770). When the EX CTS is the slave, the ERC generates the external timing reference signal 784 based on the output signal 781 and synchronous with ERC_STRAT_SYNC (corresponding to STRAT_SYNC 755 from the other EX CTS).

External reference signal 784 is then sent to a first level clock driver 785 and from there to second level clock drivers 786a-786d which provide external timing reference signals (STRAT_REF1-STRAT_REFN) that are distributed across the mid-plane(s) to EX LTSs on the other network device cards and the EX LTS on the same network device card, the other EX CTS and the EX CTS itself. The ERC circuit also generates BITS1_TXREF and BITS2_TXREF signals that are provided to BITS T1/E1 framer 758.

The hardware control logic also includes an activity detector 788 that receives STRAT_REF_ACTIVITY from clock driver 785. Activity detector 788 sends a status signal to the hardware control logic, and if the status indicates that STRAT_REF_ACTIVITY is inactive, then the hardware control logic asserts KILL_CLKTREE. Whenever KILL_CLKTREE is asserted, the activity detector 774b in the other EX CTS detects inactivity on STRAT_SYNC and may become the master by selecting the output of the timing module as the input to MUX 772a.

Similar to hardware control logic 684 (Fig. 45) within the switch fabric CTS, hardware control logic 760 within the EX CTS implements a state machine (similar to the state machine shown in Fig. 46) based on IM_THE_MASTER and YOU_THE_MASTER signals sent between the two EX CTSs and also on slot identification signals (not shown).

In one embodiment, ports (e.g., 571a-571n, Fig. 49) on network device 540 are connected to external optical fibers carrying signals in accordance with the synchronous optical network (SONET) protocol and the external timing reference signal is a 19.44MHz signal that may be used as the SONET transmit reference clock. This signal may also be divided down to provide an 8KHz SONET framing pulse (i.e., J0FP) or multiplied up to provide higher frequency signals. For example, four times 19.44MHz is 77.76MHz which is the base frequency for a SONET OC1 stream, two times 77.76MHz provides the base frequency for an OC3 stream and eight times 77.76MHz provides the base frequency for an OC12 stream.

In one embodiment, the embedded processor timing reference signal within the 19.44MHz external timing reference signal is 8KHz. Since the processor timing reference signal and the SONET framing pulse are both 8KHz, the embedded processor timing reference signal may be used to supply both. In addition, the embedded processor timing reference signal may also be used to supply BITS1_TXREF and BITS2_TXREF signals to BITS T1/E1 framer 758.

Referring to Fig. 51, the 19.44MHz external reference timing signal with embedded 8KHz processor timing reference signal from ERC 782 (i.e., output signal 784) includes a duty-cycle distortion 790 every 125 microseconds (us) representing the embedded 8KHz signal. In this embodiment, VCXO 780 is a 77.76 MHz VCXO providing a 77.76 MHz clock output signal 781. The ERC uses VCXO output signal 781 to generate output signal 784 as described in more detail below. Basically, every 125us, the ERC holds the output signal 784 high for one extra 77.76MHz clock cycle to create a 75% / 25% duty cycle in output signal 784. This duty cycle distortion is used by the EX LTSs and EX CTSs to extract the 8KHz signal from output signal 784, and since the EX LTS's use only the rising edge of the 19.44MHz signal to synchronize local external timing signals, the duty cycle distortion does not affect that synchronization.

External Reference Clock (ERC) circuit:

Referring to Fig. 52, an embeddor circuit 792 within the ERC receives VCXO output signal 781 (77.76MHz) at four embedding registers 794a-794d, a 9720-1 rollover counter 796 and three 8KHz output registers 798a-798b. Each embedding register passes its value (logic 1 or 0) to the next embedding register, and embedding register 794d provides ERC output signal 784 (19.44MHz external timing reference signal with embedded 8KHz processor timing reference signal). The output of embedding register 794b is also inverted and provided as an input to embedding register 794a. When running, therefore, the embedding registers maintain a repetitive output 784 of a high for two 77.76MHz clock pulses and then low for two 77.76MHz which provides a 19.44MHz signal. Rollover counter 796 and a load circuit 800 are used to embed the 8KHz signal.

The rollover counter increments on each 77.76MHz clock tick and at 9720-1 (9720-1 times 77.76MHz = 8KHz), the counter rolls over to zero. Load circuit 800 detects when the counter value is zero and loads a logic 1 into embedding registers 794a, 794b and 794c and a logic zero into embedding register 794d. As a result, the output of embedding register 794d is held high for three 77.76MHz clock pulses (since logic ones are loaded into three embedding registers) which forces the duty cycle distortion into the 19.44MHz output signal 784.

BITS circuits 802a and 802b also monitor the value of the rollover counter. While the value is less than or equal to 4860-1 (half of 8KHz), the BITS circuits provide a logic one to 8KHz output registers 798a and 798b, respectively. When the value changes to 4860, the BITS circuits toggle from a logic one to a logic zero and continue to send a logic zero to 8KHz output registers 798a and 798b, respectively, until the rollover counter rolls over. As a result, 8KHz output registers 798a and 798b provide 8KHz signals with a 50% duty cycle on BITS1_TXREF and BITS2_TXREF to the BITS T1/E1 framer.

As long as a clock signal is received over signal 781 (77.76MHz), rollover counter 796 continues to count causing BITS circuits 802a and 802b to continue toggling 8KHz registers 798a and 798b and causing load circuit 800 to continue to load logic 1110 into the embedding registers every 8KHz. As a result, the embedding registers will continue to provide a 19MHz clock signal with an embedded 8KHz signal on line 784. This is often referred to as "fly wheeling."

Referring to Fig. 53, an extractor circuit 804 within the ERC is used to extract the embedded 8 KHz signal from ERC_STRAT_SYNC. When the EX CTS is the master, ERC_STRAT_SYNC corresponds to the output signal 770 from the timing module 768 (pure 19.44MHz), and thus, no embedded 8KHz signal is extracted. When the EX CTS is the slave, ERC_STRAT_SYNC corresponds to the external timing reference signal provided by the other EX CTS (i.e., STRAT_SYNC 755; 19.44MHz with embedded 8KHz) and the embedded 8KHz signal is extracted. The extractor circuit includes three extractor registers 806a-806c. Each extractor register is connected to the 77.76MHz

VCXO output signal 781, and on each clock pulse, extractor register 806a receives a logic one input and passes its value to extractor register 806b which passes its value to extractor register 806c which provides an 8KHz pulse 808. The extractor registers are also connected to ERC_STRAT_SYNC which provides an asynchronous reset to the extractor registers – that is, when ERC_STRAT_SYNC is logic zero, the registers are reset to zero. Every two 77.76MHz clock pulses, therefore, the extractor registers are reset and for most cycles, extractor register 806c passes a logic zero to output signal 808. However, when the EX CTS is the slave, every 8KHz ERC_STRAT_SYNC remains a logic one for three 77.76 MHz clock pulses allowing a logic one to be passed through each register and onto output signal 808 to provide an 8KHz pulse.

8KHz output signal 808 is passed to extractor circuit 804 and used to reset the rollover counter to synchronize the rollover counter to the embedded 8KHz signal within ERC_STRAT_SYNC when the EX CTS is the slave. As a result, the 8KHz embedded signal generated by both EX CTSs are synchronized.

External Local Timing Subsystem (EX LTS):

Referring to Fig. 54, EX LTS 756 receives STRAT_REF_B from one EX CTS and STRAT_REF_A from the other EX CTS. STRAT_REF_B and STRAT_REF_A correspond to one of STRAT_REF1-STRAT_REFN (Fig. 50) output from each EX CTS. STRAT_REF_B and STRAT_REF_A are provided as inputs to a MUX 810a and a hardware control logic 812 within the EX LTS selects the input to MUX 810a using REF_SEL (1:0) signals. An activity detector 814a monitors the activity of STRAT_REF_A and sends a signal to hardware control logic 812 if it detects an inactive signal (i.e., stuck at logic one or zero). Similarly, an activity detector 814b monitors the activity of STRAT_REF_B and sends a signal to hardware control logic 812 if it detects an inactive signal (i.e., stuck at logic one or zero). If the hardware control logic receives a signal from either activity detector indicating that the monitored signal is inactive, the hardware control logic automatically changes the REF_SEL (1:0) signals to cause MUX 810a to select the other input signal and send an interrupt to the local processor.

A second MUX 810b receives a feed back signal 816 from the EX LTS itself. Hardware control logic 812 uses FB_SEL(1:0) to select either a feedback signal input to MUX 810b or a test header 818b input to MUX 810b. The test header input is only used in a test mode. In regular use, feedback signal 816 is selected. Similarly, in a test mode, the hardware control logic may use REF_SEL(1:0) to select a test header 818a input to MUX 810a.

Output signals 820a and 820b from MUXs 810a and 810b, respectively, are provided to phase detector 822. The phase detector compares the rising edge of the two input signals to determine the magnitude of any phase shift between the two. The phase detector then generates variable voltage pulses on outputs 821a and 821b representing the magnitude of the phase shift. The phase detector outputs are used by discrete logic circuit 822 to generate a voltage on signal 823 representing the magnitude of the phase shift. The voltage is used to speed up or slow down (i.e., change the phase of) of an output 825 of a VCXO 824 to track any phase change in STRAT_REF_A or STRAT_REF_B. The discrete logic components implement filters that determine how quickly or slowly the VCXO's output will track the change in phase detected on the reference signal.

In one embodiment, the VCXO is a 155.51MHz or a 622MHz VCXO. This value is dependent upon the clock speeds required by components, outside the EX LTS but on the local card, that are responsible for transferring network data over the optical fibers in accordance with the SONET protocol. On at least the universal port card, the VCXO output 825 signal is sent to a clock driver 830 for providing local data transfer components with a 622MHz or 155.52MHz clock signal 831.

The VCXO output 825 is also sent to a divider chip 826 for dividing the signal down and outputting a 77.76MHz output signal 827 to a clock driver chip 828. Clock driver chip 828 provides 77.76MHz output signals 829a for use by components on the local printed circuit board and provides 77.76MHz output signal 829b to ERC circuit 782. The ERC circuit also receives input signal 832 corresponding to the EX LTS selected input signal either STRAT_REF_B or STRAT_REF_A. As shown, the same ERC circuit that is used

in the EX CTS may be used in the EX LTS to extract an 8KHz J0FP pulse for use by data transfer components on the local printed circuit board. Alternatively, the ERC circuit could include only a portion of the logic in ERC circuit 782 on the EX CTS.

Similar to hardware control logic 712 (Fig. 47) within the switch fabric LTS, hardware control logic 812 within the EX LTS implements a state machine (similar to the state machine shown in Fig. 48) based on signals from activity detectors 814a and 814b.

External Reference Clock (ERC) circuit:

Referring again to Figs. 52 and 53, when the ERC circuit is within an EX LTS circuit, the inputs to extractor circuit 804 are input signal 832 corresponding to the LTS selected input signal either STRAT_REF_B or STRAT_REF_A and 77.76MHz clock input signal 829b. The extracted 8KHz pulse 808 is again provided to embeddor circuit 792 and used to reset rollover counter 796 in order to synchronize the counter with the embedded 8KHz signal with STRAT_REF_A or STRAT_REF_B. Because the EX CTSs that provide STRAT_REF_A and STRAT_REF_B are synchronous, the embedded 8KHz signals within both signals are also synchronous. Within the EX LTS, the embedding registers 794a-794d and BITS registers 798a and 798b are not used. Instead, a circuit 834 monitors the value of the rollover counter and when the rollover counter rolls over to a value of zero, circuit 834 sends a logic one to 8KHz register 798c which provides an 8KHz pulse signal 836 that may be sent by the LTS to local data transfer components (i.e., J0FP) and processor components as a local processor timing signal.

Again, as long as a clock signal is received over signal 829b (77.76MHz), rollover counter 796 continues to count causing circuit 834 to continue pulsing 8KHz register 798c.

External Central Timing Subsystem (EX CTS) Alternate Embodiment:

Referring to Fig. 55, instead of using one of the STRAT_REF1-STRAT_REFN signals from the other EX CTS as an input to MUX 772a, the output 770 (marked "Alt. Output to other EX CTS") of timing module 768 may be provided to the other EX CTS and

received as input 838 (marked "Alt. Input from other EX CTS"). The PLL circuit, including MUXs 772a and 772b, phase detector 776, discrete logic circuit 778 and VCXO 780, is necessary to synchronize the output of the VCXO with either output 770 of the timing module or a signal from the other EX CTS. However, PLL circuits may introduce jitter into their output signals (e.g., output 781), and passing the PLL output signal 781 via one of the STRAT_REF1-STRAT_REFN signals from one EX CTS into the PLL of the other EX CTS -- that is, PLL to PLL -- may introduce additional jitter into output signal 781. Since accurate timing signals are critical for proper data transfer with other network devices and SONET standards specifically set maximum allowable jitter transmission at interfaces (Bellcore GR-253-CORE and SONET Transport Systems Common Carrier Criteria), jitter should be minimized. Passing the output 770 of the timing module within the EX CTS to the input 838 of the other EX CTS avoids passing the output of one PLL to the input of the second PLL and thereby reduces the potential introduction of jitter.

It is still necessary to send one of the STRAT_REF1-STRAT_REFN signals to the other EX CTS (received as STRAT_SYNC 755) in order to provide ERC 782 with a 19.44MHz signal with an embedded 8KHz clock for use when the EX CTS is a slave. The ERC circuit only uses ERC_STRAT_SYNC in this instance when the EX CTS is the slave.

Layer One Test Port:

The present invention provides programmable physical layer (i.e., layer one) test ports within an upper layer network device (e.g., network device 540, Fig. 35). The test ports may be connected to external test equipment (e.g., an analyzer) to passively monitor data being received by and transmitted from the network device or to actively drive data to the network device. Importantly, data provided at a test port accurately reflects data received by or transmitted by the network device with minimal modification and no upper layer translation or processing. Moreover, data is supplied to the test ports without disrupting or slowing the service provided by the network device.

corresponding to path LID 1666 and received on port 571a to port 571b and data corresponding to path LID 1666 and transmitted to port 571a by forwarding card 546c to port 571c.

Analyzer 840 may then be used to monitor both the network data received on port 571a and the network data being transmitted from port 571a. Alternatively, analyzer 840 may only be connected to one test port to monitor either the data received on port 571a or the data transmitted from port 571a. The data received on port 571a may be altered by the components on the port card(s) and the cross-connection cards before the data reaches the test port but any modification is minimal. For example, where the external network attachment 576a is a SONET optical fiber, the port card components may convert the optical signals into electrical signals that are passed to the cross-connection card and then back to the test ports, which reconvert the electrical signals into optical signals before the signals are passed to analyzer 840. Since the data received at port 571a has not been processed or translated by the upper layer processing components on the forwarding card, the data accurately reflects the data received at the port. For example, the physical layer (e.g., SONET) information and format is accurately reflected in the data received.

To passively monitor both the data received and transmitted by a particular port, two transmitters are necessary and, thus, two ports are consumed for testing and cannot be used for normal data transfer. Because the test ports are programmable through the cross-connection card, however, the test ports may be re-programmed at any time to be used for normal data transfer. In addition, redundant ports may be used as test ports to avoid consuming ports needed for normal data transfer. Current network devices often have a dedicated test port that can provide both the data received and transmitted by a working port. The dedicated test port, however, contains specialized hardware that is different from the working ports and, thus, cannot be used as a working port. Hence, although two ports may be consumed for monitoring the input and output of one working port, they are only temporarily consumed and may be re-programmed at any time. Similarly, if the port card on which a test port is located fails, the test port(s) may be quickly and easily reprogrammed to another port on another port card that has not failed.

Instead of passively monitoring the data received at port 571a, test equipment 840 may be connected to the receiver of a test port and used to drive data to network device 540. For example, the network administrator may connect test equipment 840 to the receiver of test port 571c and then notify the NMS to enable the receiver on port 571c to receive path 1666. With this information, the NMS modifies test path table 841. For example, record 844 (Fig. 58) indicates that the receive portion of path 1666 (i.e., "ingress" in Monitor column 844) is to be driven (i.e., "yes" in Enable Port Receiver column 845) externally with data from port LID 1233 (i.e., port 571c). Again, an active query notification is sent to path manager 597. Path manager 597 then disables the receiver corresponding to port LID 1231 (i.e., port 571a) and enables the receiver corresponding to port LID 1233 (i.e., port 571c) and passes the path connection information to cross-connection manager 605 indicating that port LID 1231 will supply the receive portion of path 1666. The cross-connection manager uses the connection information to generate a new connection program table 601 to re-program the internal connections through the cross-connection card. In addition, the network administrator may also indicate that the transmitter of port 571a should be disabled, and path manager 597 would disable the transmitter of port 571a and pass the connection information to the cross connection manager.

After re-programming, cross-connection card 562a data is sent from test equipment 840 to test port 571c and then through the cross-connection card to forwarding card 546c. The cross-connection card may multicast the data from forwarding card 546c to both working port 571a and to test port 571c, or just to test port 571c or just working port 571a.

Instead of having test equipment 840 drive data to the network device over a test port, internal components on a port card, cross-connection card or forwarding card within the network device may drive data to the other cards and to other network devices over external physical attachments connected to working ports and/or test ports. For example, the internal components may be capable of generating a pseudo-random bit sequence (PRBS). Test equipment 840 connected to one or more test ports may then be used to

passively monitor the data sent from and/or received by the working port, and the internal components may be capable of detecting a PRBS over the working port and/or test port(s).

Although the test ports have been shown on the same port card as the working port being tested, it should be understood, that the test ports may be on any port card in the same quadrant as the working port. Where cross-connection cards are interconnected, the test ports may be on any port card in a different quadrant so long as the cross-connection card in the different quadrant is connected to the cross-connection card in same quadrant as the working port. Similarly, the test ports may be located on different port cards with respect to each other. A different working port may be tested by re-programming the cross-connection card to multicast data corresponding to the different working port to the test port(s). In addition, multiple working ports may be tested simultaneously by re-programming the cross-connection card to multicast data from different paths on different working ports to the same test port(s) or to multiple different test ports. A network administrator may choose to dedicate certain ports as test ports prior to any testing needing to be done or the network administrator may choose certain ports as test ports when problems arise.

The programmable physical layer test port or ports allow a network administrator to test data received at or transmitted from any working port or ports and also to drive data to any upper layer card (i.e., forwarding card) within the network device. Only the port card(s) and cross-connection card need be working properly to passively monitor data received at and sent from a working port. Testing and re-programming test ports may take place during normal operation without disrupting data transfer through the network device to allow for diagnosis without network device disruption.

It will be understood that variations and modifications of the above described methods and apparatuses will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art and may be made without departing from the inventive concepts described herein. Accordingly, the

embodiments described herein are to be viewed merely as illustrative, and not limiting,
and the inventions are to be limited solely by the scope and spirit of the appended claims.

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Claims:

1. A method of operating a telecommunications system, comprising:
sending a first metadata file from a network device to an external management system;
generating a first management data file within the network device;
sending the first management data file from the network device to the external management system; and
processing the first management data file in accordance with the first metadata file.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the first management data file is generated asynchronously with respect to the processing of the first management data file.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the first management data file is generated synchronously with respect to the processing of the first management data file.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the first metadata file is a JAVA class file.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein sending the first metadata file and first management data file from the network device to the external management system comprises:
sending the first metadata file and first management data file from the network device to an external file transfer system.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein sending the first management data file comprises:
executing a file transfer protocol push.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein sending a first metadata file comprises:
executing a file transfer protocol push.
8. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

generating a first data summary file corresponding to the first management data file; and

sending the first data summary file to the external management system, wherein the first management data file is processed in accordance with both the first data summary file and the first metadata file.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein sending the first data summary file comprises: executing a file transfer protocol push.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

generating a second management data file within the network device;
sending the second management data file from the network device to the external management system; and
processing the second management data file in accordance with the first metadata file.

11. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

sending a second metadata file from the network device to the external management system;
generating a second management data file within the network device;
sending the second management data file from the network device to the external management system; and
processing the second management data file in accordance with the second metadata file.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the network device is a first network device and wherein the method further comprises:

sending a second metadata file from a second network device to the external management system;
generating a second management data file within the second network device;

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sending the second management data file from the second network device to the external management system; and

processing the second management data file in accordance with the second metadata file.

13. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

adding a hardware module to the network device;

downloading a second metadata file to the network device corresponding to the hardware module;

sending the second metadata file from the network device to the external management system;

generating a second management data file within the network device;

sending the second management data file from the network device to the external management system; and

processing the second management data file in accordance with the second metadata file.

14. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

downloading a modified first metadata file to the network device;

sending the modified first metadata file from the network device to the external management system;

generating a second management data file within the network device;

sending the second management data file from the network device to the external management system; and

processing the second management data file in accordance with the modified first metadata file.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the external management system comprises a data collector server.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the external management system comprises a network manager server.
17. The method of claim 1, wherein the external management system comprises a billing server.
18. A method of operating a telecommunications system, comprising:
 - sending a first plurality of metadata files from a first network device to an external management system;
 - generating a first plurality of management data files within the first network device;
 - sending the first management data files from the first network device to the external management system; and
 - processing each of the first management data files in accordance with a corresponding one of the first metadata files.
19. The method of claim 18, wherein the first management data files are generated asynchronously with respect to the processing of the first management data files.
20. The method of claim 18, wherein the first management data files are generated synchronously with respect to the processing of the first management data files.
21. The method of claim 18, wherein the first metadata files are JAVA class files.
22. The method of claim 18, further comprising:
 - sending a second plurality of metadata files from a second network device to the external management system;
 - generating a second plurality of management data files within the second network device;
 - sending the second management data files from the second network device to the external management system; and

28. The telecommunications system of claim 27, wherein the metadata file comprises a JAVA class file.

Abstract of the Disclosure

The present invention provides a management system internal to a network device that sends various management data files and corresponding metadata files to a management system external to the network device. The external management system then uses the metadata files to process the management data files. As a result, the external management system dynamically learns how to manage a network device through the metadata files. Moreover, new types of management data files -- perhaps corresponding to new hardware within the network device -- may be sent from the internal management system to the external management system along with corresponding new metadata files and the external management system will be able to process the new management files without having to be re-booted or restarted. In addition, multiple network devices coupled with the external management system may send various different types of management data to the external management system and using the metadata files from each network device, the external management system will be able to process the various management data types. In one embodiment, the metadata files are JAVA class files.

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FIG. 1

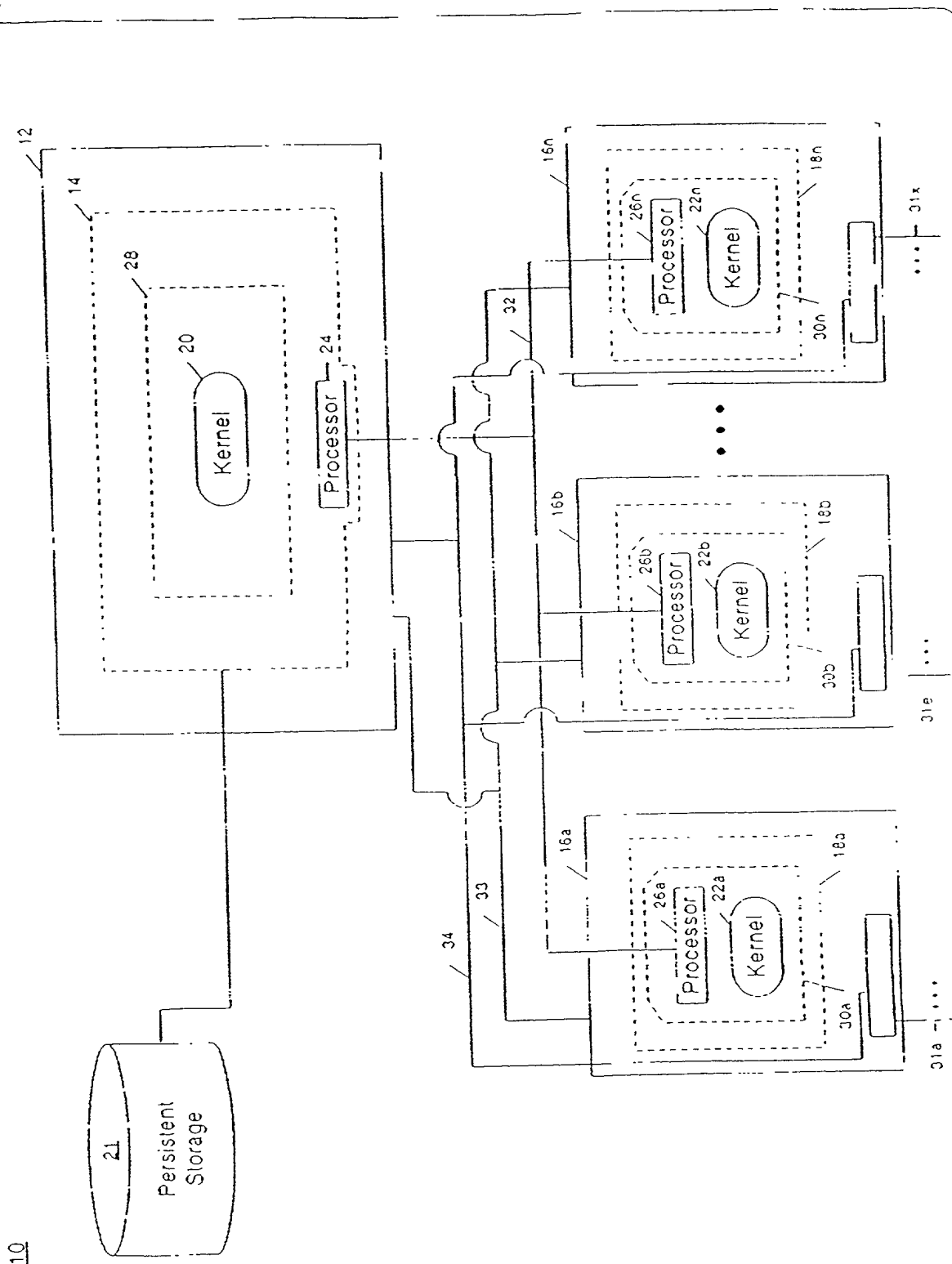
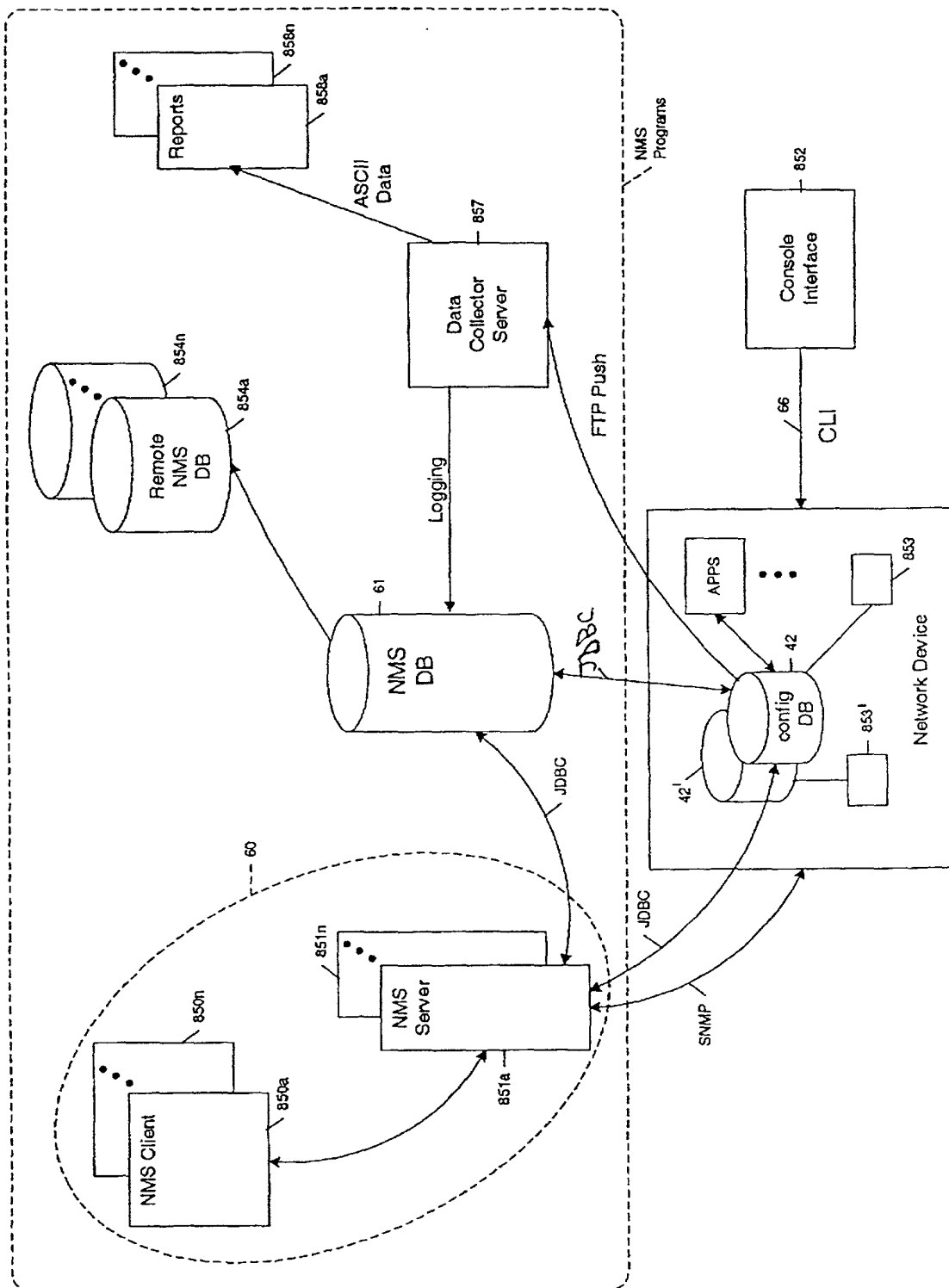


Fig. 2a



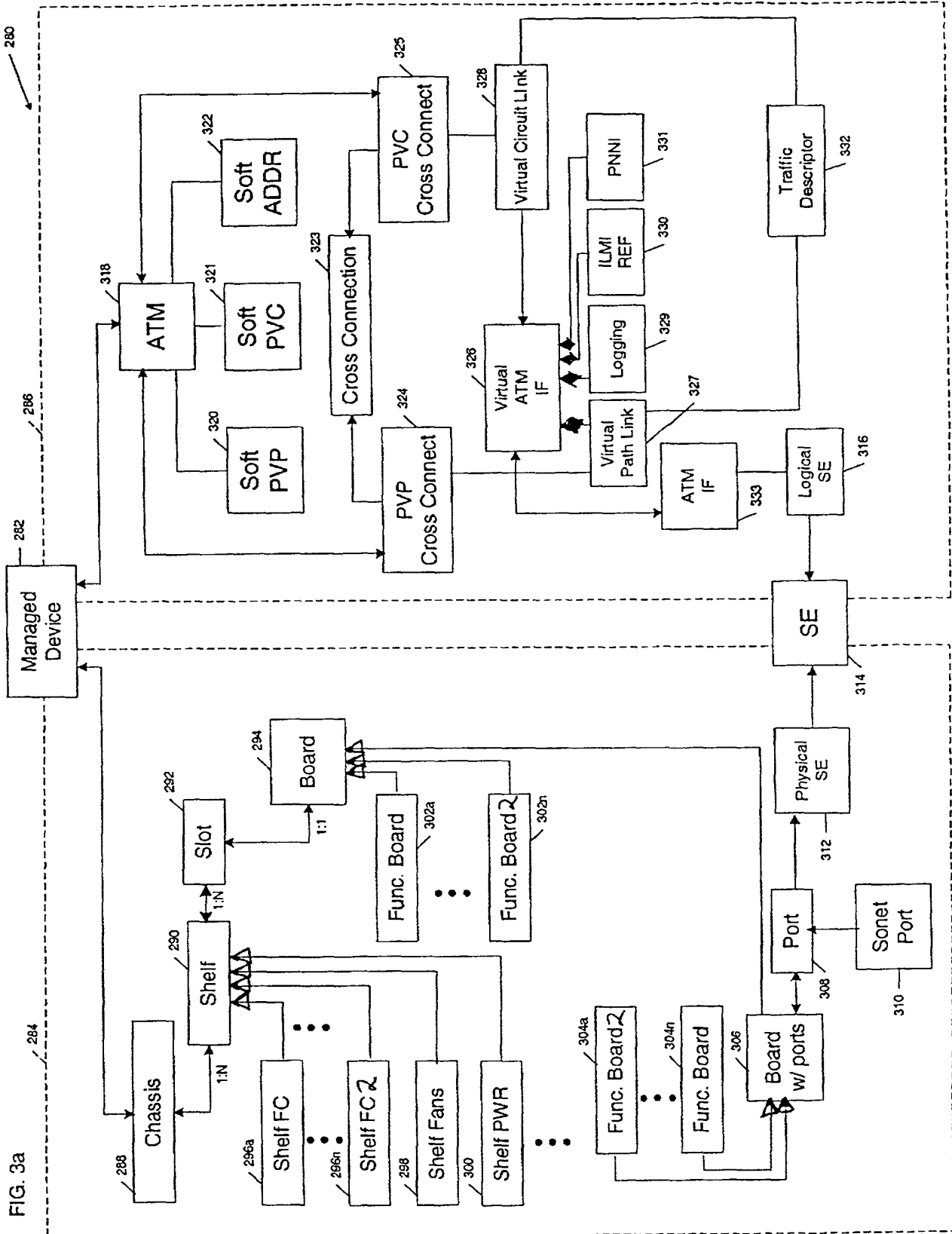
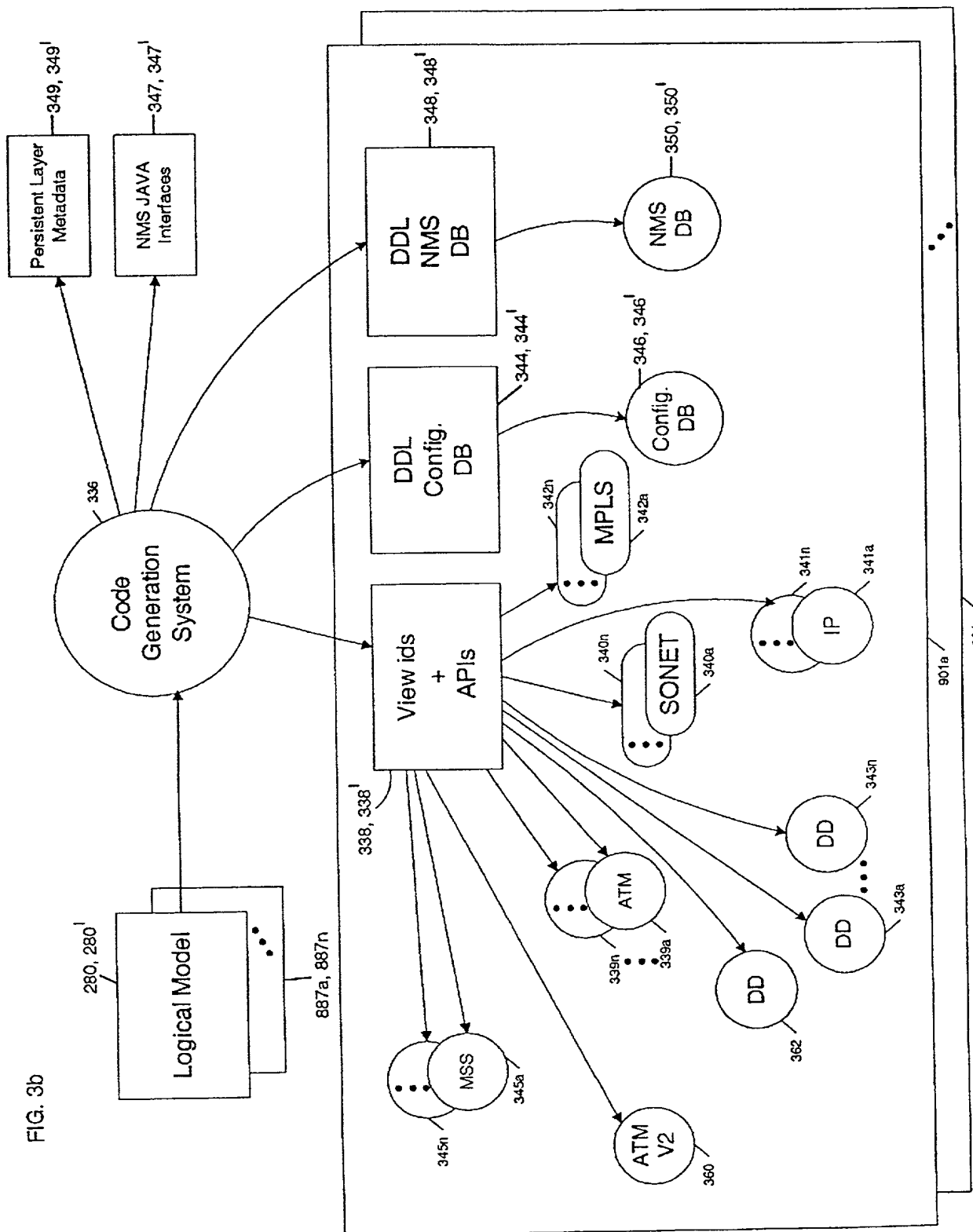


FIG. 3b



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FIG. 3c

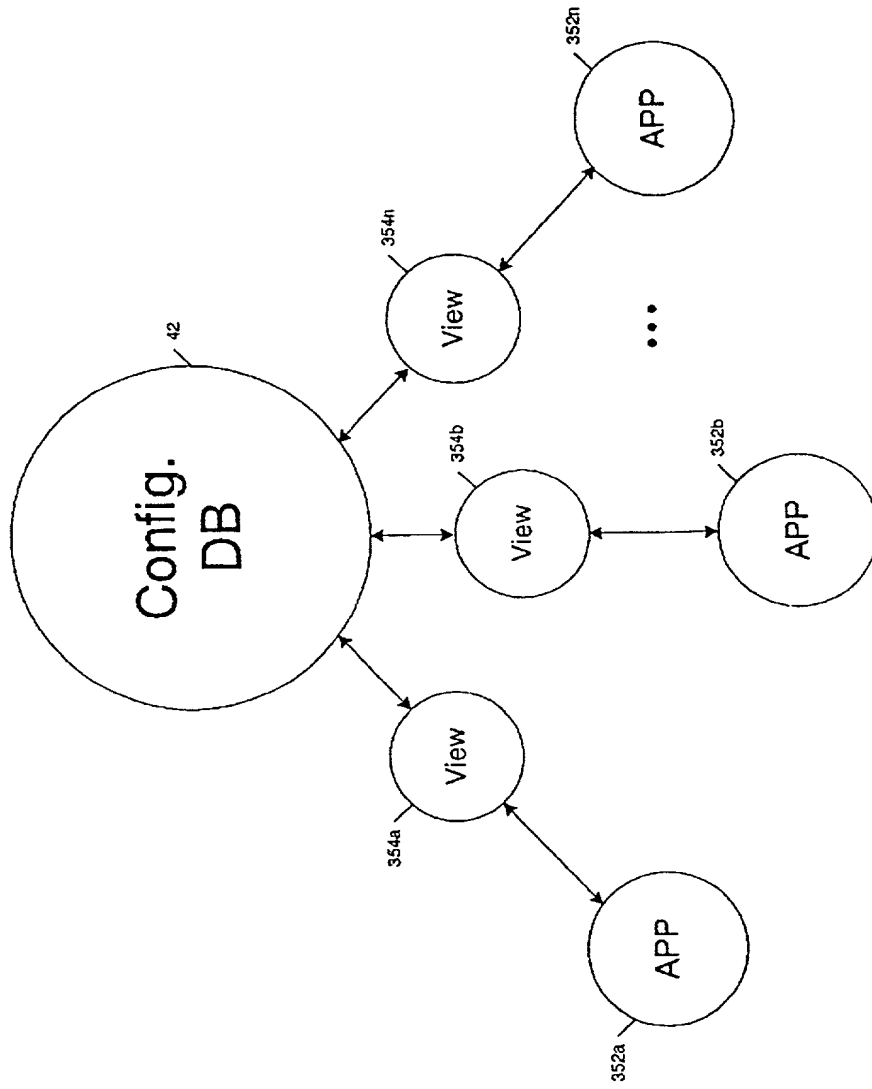


Fig. 3d

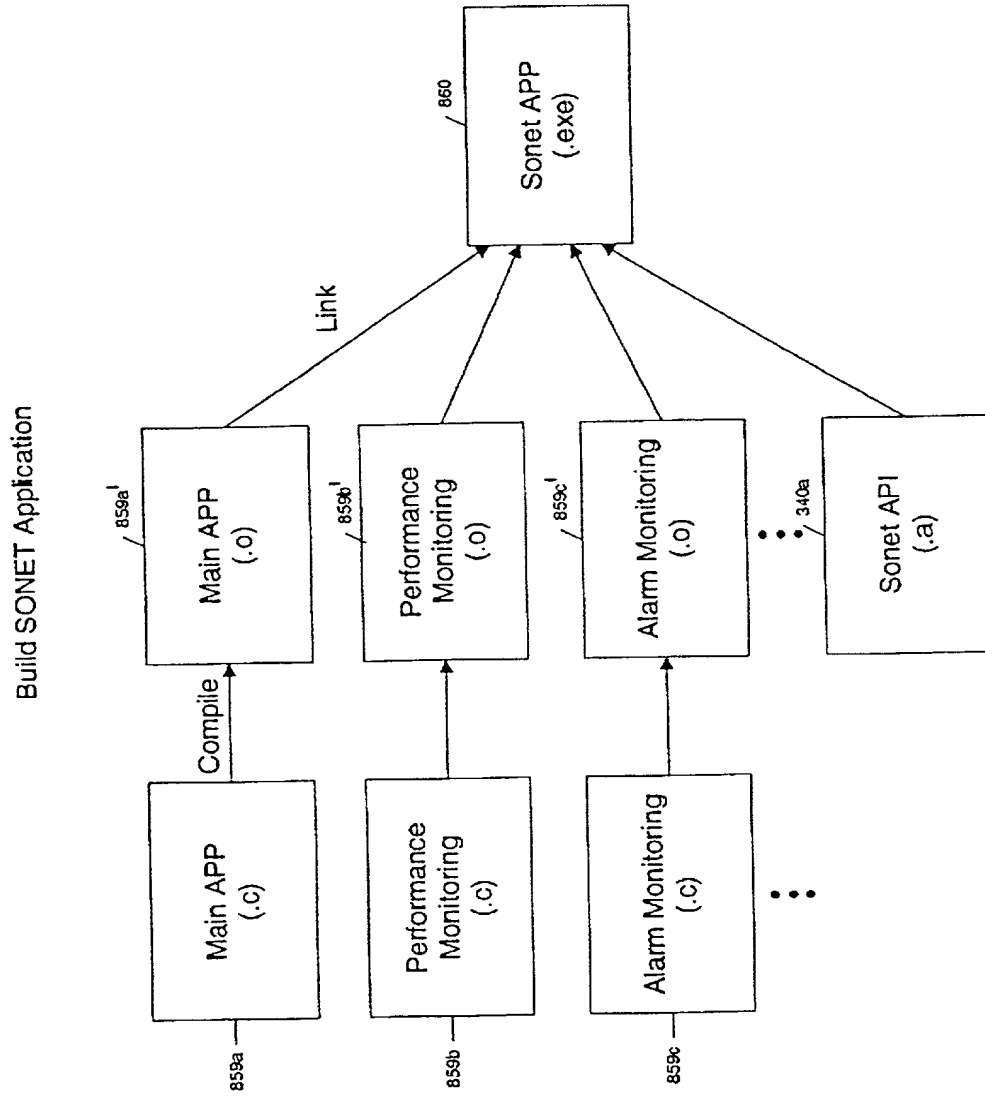


Fig. 3e

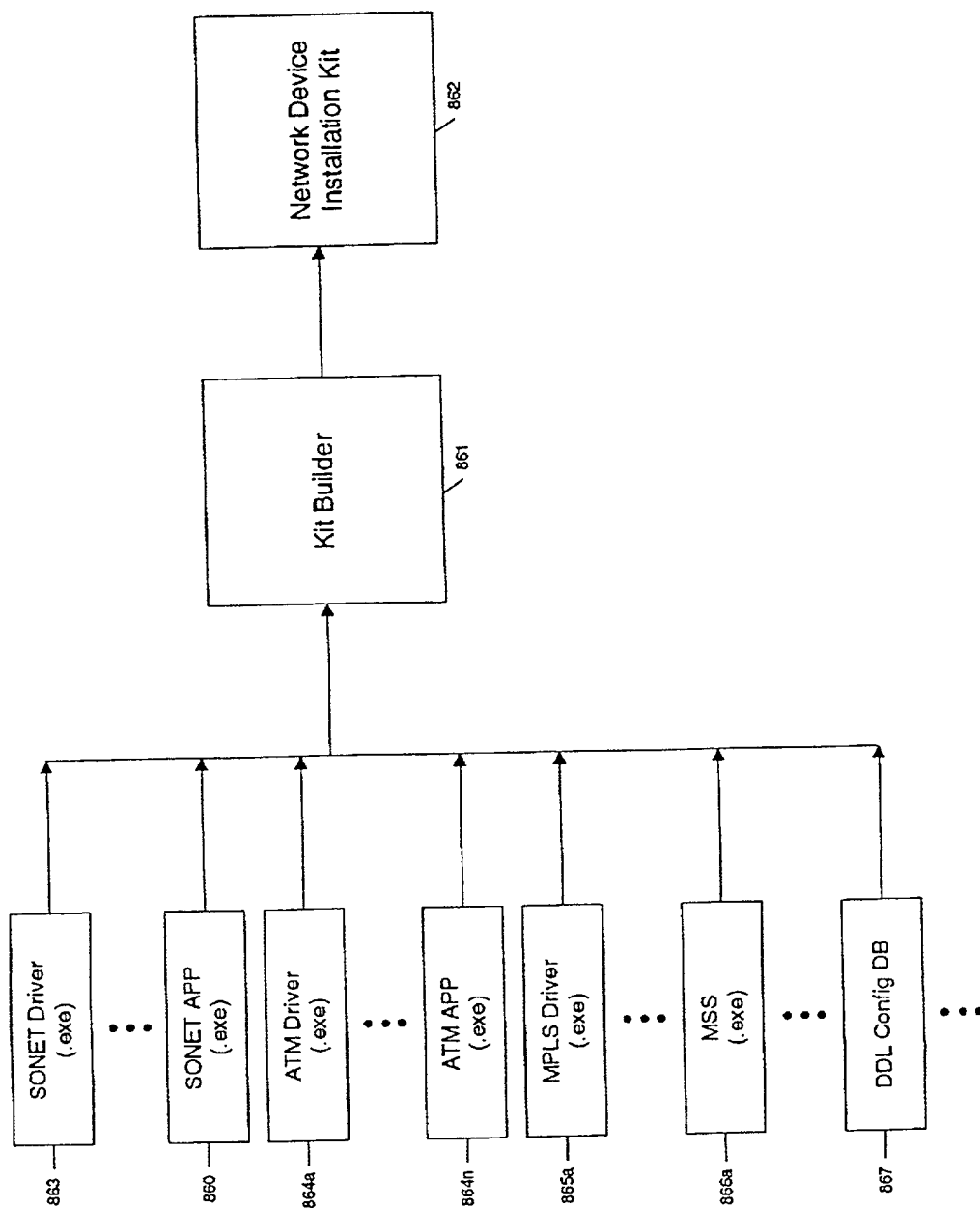
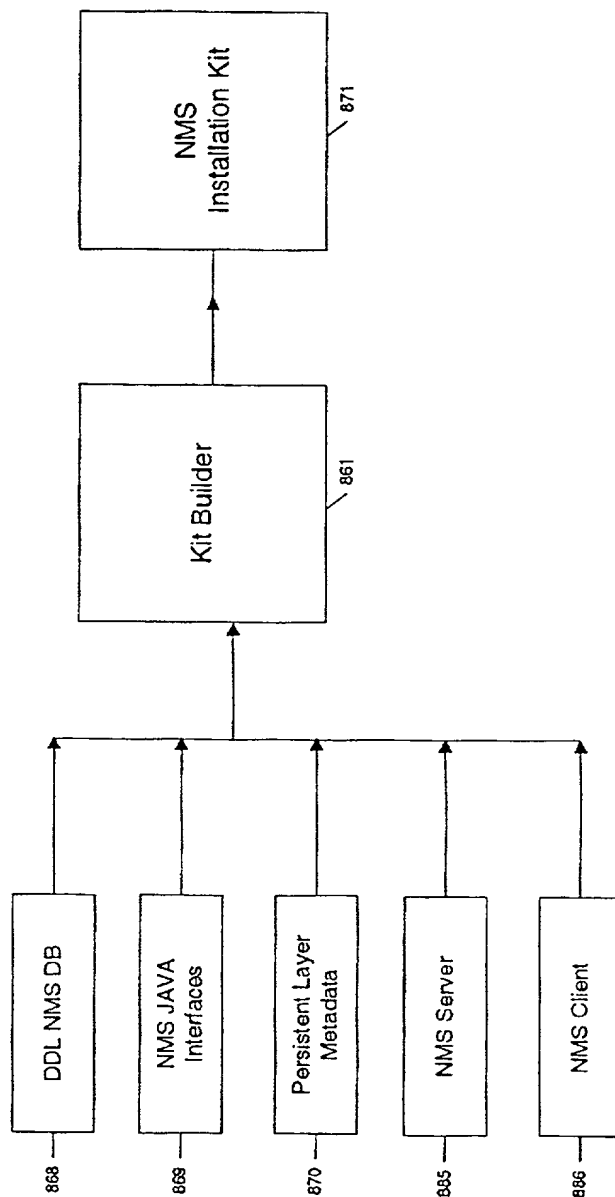


Fig. 3A



```

graph TD
    874{User selects box ?} -- No --> 874
    874 -- Yes --> 875[Client informs server of box to be managed]
    875 --> 876[Server constructs object model of box]
    876 --> 877[Server provides box details to client]
    877 --> 878[client displays GUI to user]
    878 --> 879{User config.s box}
    879 -- No --> 879
    879 -- Yes --> 880[Client passes config data to server]
    880 --> 881[Server generates commands & sends to config DB]
    881 --> 882[Config. DB fills in tables]
    882 --> 883[Active query or queries sent to control programs]
    883 --> 884[Control programs implement config.]
    884 --> 874
  
```

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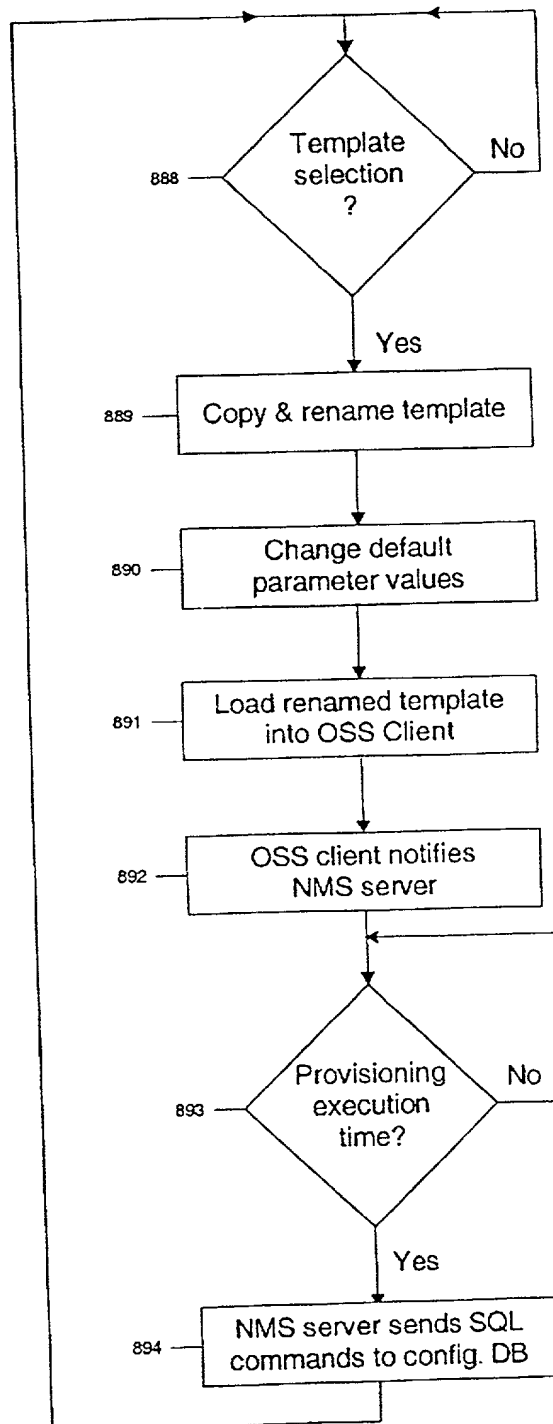


Fig. 3h

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```

N5 Command Prompt (2) - enetcli
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli> help
Commands are:
bye
close
execute
help
load
manage
open
quit
showCurrent
showTemplate
set
status
writeCurrent
writeTemplate
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli> showCurrent SPATH
ATMIfName=ATMIf11/1/1
Concatenated=false
Name=Path11/1/1
Operant=SPATH
Operator=Create
PortID=1
Position=1
Service=AIM
ShelfID=11
SlotID=1
Type=Terminated
Version=U1_1_0_0
Width=STS3
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli> showTemplate SPATH
ATMIfName=<String>[TerminatedOnly]
Concatenated=<true|false>
Name=<String>
Operant=SPATH
Operator=(Create|Replace|Update|Delete)
PortID=<Integer><1-16>
Position=<Integer>
Service=(None|AIM)
ShelfID=<11|top1,13|bottom1>
SlotID=<Integer><1-8>
Type=(Switched|Terminated)
Version=U1_1_0_0
Width=<STS1|STS3|STS12|STS48>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli> status
Not currently connected to server
Supporting templates: CONTROL, PUC, SPATH, SPUC, ID, and UAIF
Enetcli>

```

912

913

914

915

916

917

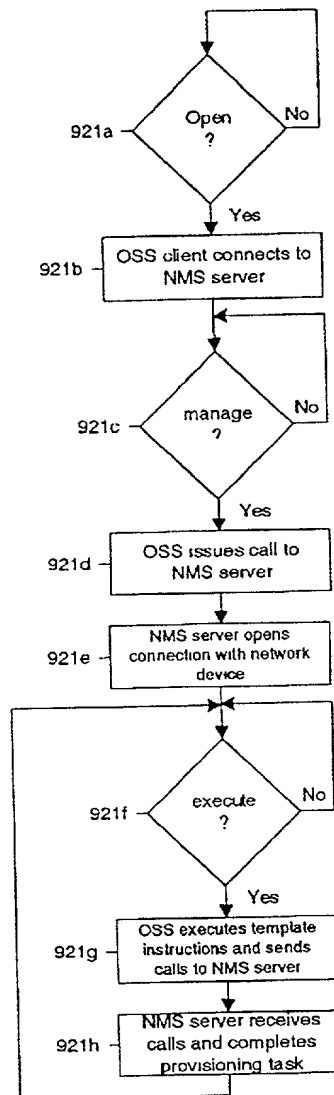
918

919

920

Fig.3i

Fig. 3j



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Fig. 3K

```
Command Prompt (2) - enetcli
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
Enetcli>
922- Enetcli> showCurrent CONTROL
Input=Q:\nms\com\equipecom\nms\utils\enetcli
Interactive=false
Operant=CONTROL
923d- Operator=Manage
923f- Output=Q:\nms\com\equipecom\nms\utils\enetcli
923c- Password=None
923e- System=192.168.9.202
923b- User=None
923g- Version=01_1_0_0
923a- Server=localhost
Enetcli>
```

00120-0082E960

Fig. 3L

← 924 BATCH

Operant=BATCH

Operator=Execute

Version=V1_1_0_0

924a — Task1=execute-SPATH

924b — Task2=execute-PVC

924c — Task3=execute-SPVC

924d — Task4=load-SPVC-spvc1

924e — Task5=execute-SPVC

924f — Task6=load-SPVC-spvc2

924c — Task7=execute-SPVC

924g — Task50=set-SPATH-PortID-3

924h — Task51=execute-SPATH

924i — Task52=set-SPATH-SlotID-2

924j — Task53=execute-SPATH

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Fig. 3M

← 925

Operant=BATCH

Operator=Execute

- Version=VI_1_0_0

925a — Task1=execute-CONTROL

925b — Task2=execute-SPATH

925c — Task3=set-SPATH-PortID-3

925d — Task4=execute-SPATH

.

.

925e — Task61=set-CONTROL-System-192.168.9.201

925f — Task62=execute-CONTROL

925g — Task63=execute-SPATH

.

.

925h — Task108=close

925i — Task109=sct-CONTROL-Server-Server1

925j — Task110=set-CONTROL-System-192.168.8.200

925k — Task111=execute-CONTROL

925l — Task112=execute-SPATH

.

.

.

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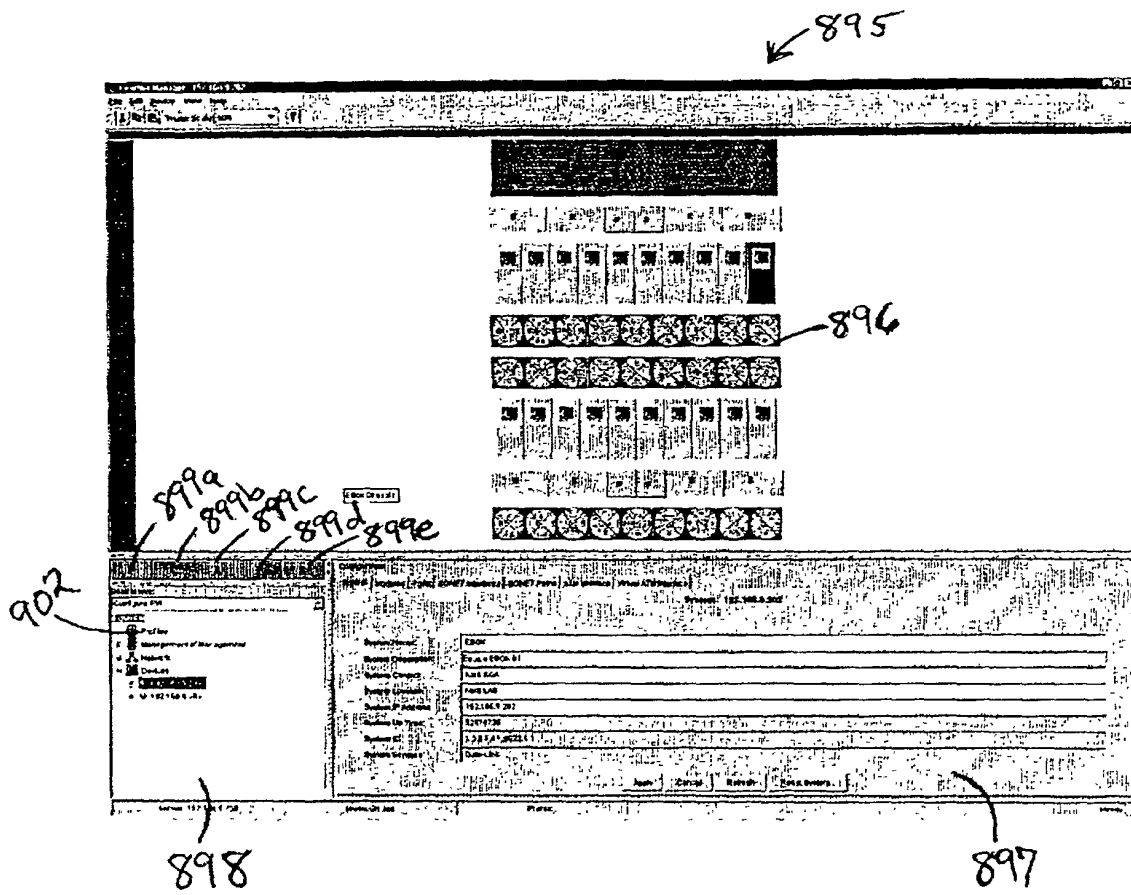


Fig. 4a

ÉvailNet Manager: Fault - Event Summary			
System: 192.132.65.160			
System	Event	Event Number	Description
1.1.55.6	Fan OverTemp	44	"Fan marginally functioning"
1.1.55.7	New Board Ins...	75	"New board inserted"
OK			

Fig. 4b

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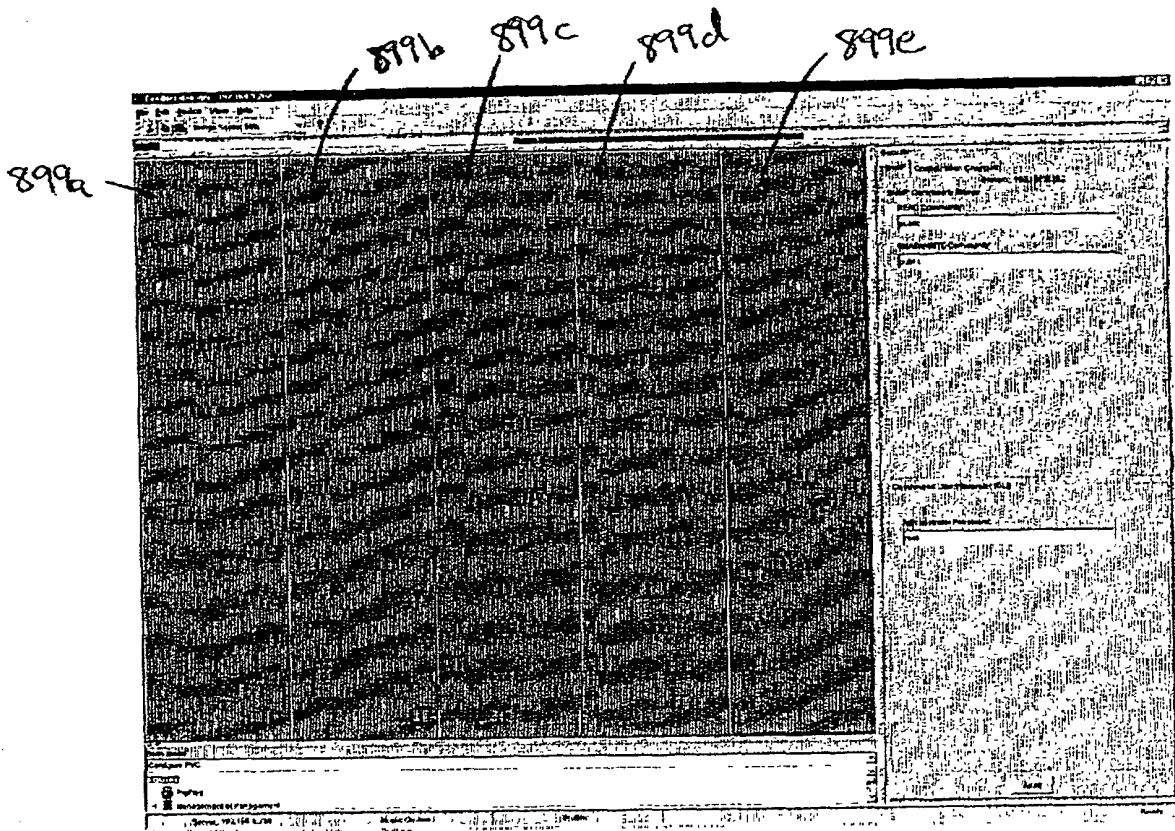


Fig. 4c

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903

904

Profile Manager					
System: 192.168.1.50					
Name	Description	Security Level	Timeout	Primary Server	Secondary Server
Joe	Joe Whitehouse	Admin	15	192.168.1.32	192.168.1.37
Wame	Wame Arena	15		TeamServer1 192.168...	TeamServer2 192.168 1.32

905

906

Fig. 4d

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Fig. 4e

907

General

Username: Kevin

Description: Kevin Snow user account

Group Name: Equipe

Group Level Access:

Password: *****

Confirm Password: *****

Policies

☒ User Cannot Change Password

☐ Account Disabled

☒ User Can Add Devices

User Session Timeout: 15 Minutes

Servers

Primary Server: 192.168.1.220

Primary Server Port: 6500

Secondary Server: 192.168.1.221

Secondary Server Port: 6503

Devices

Device	READ	READWRITE	Retry	Timeout
192.168.9.202	public	equipe	3	5
192.168.9.205	public	equipe	3	5
192.168.9.216	public	equipe	3	5

Add Delete

OK Cancel

908a
908e
908f
908d
908b
908c

908h
908i
908j

908k

908l
908n
908m
908o

908p

908q

908r

908s

908g

00T80"0082E960

Fig. 4f

General Policies Servers Devices

Username: Kevin

Description: Kevin Snow user account

Customer Name: Equipe

Group Level Access: [dropdown]

Password: *****

Confirm Password: *****

OK Cancel

General Policies Servers Devices

☐ User Cannot Change Password

☐ Account Disabled

☒ User Can Add Devices

User Session Timeout: 15 Minutes

OK Cancel

Fig. 4g

001180" 0087E960

Fig. 4h

General Policies Servers **Servers** Devices

Primary Server: 192.168.1.220

Primary Server Port: 6500

Secondary Server: 192.168.1.205

Secondary Server Port: 6503

OK Cancel

General Policies Servers **Devices**

Device	READ	READWRITE	Retry	Timeout	Trap Port
192.168.9.202	public	equipe	3	5	162
192.168.9.205	public	equipe	3	5	162
192.168.9.216	public	equipe	3	5	5012

Add Delete

OK Cancel

Fig. 4i

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909

910a

910b

910c

910d

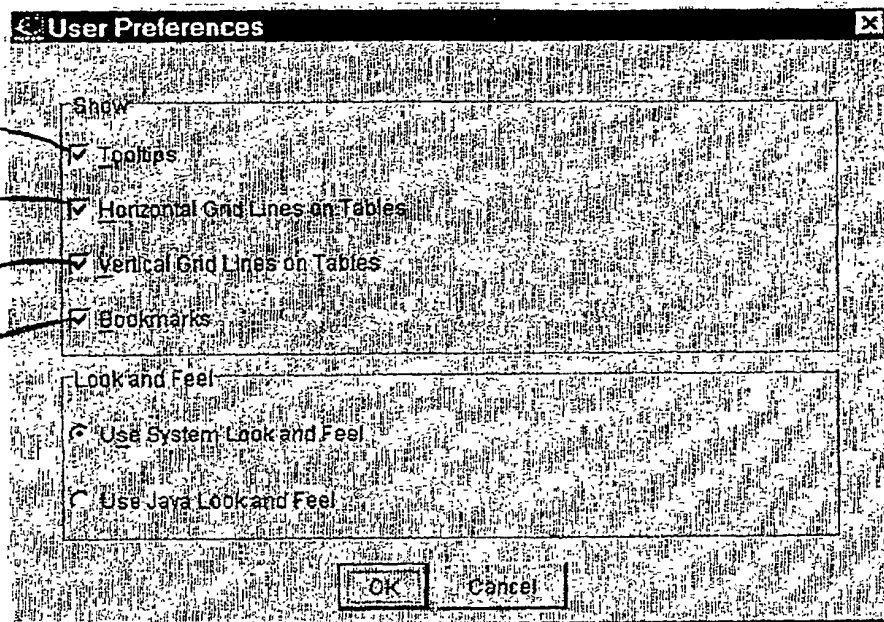
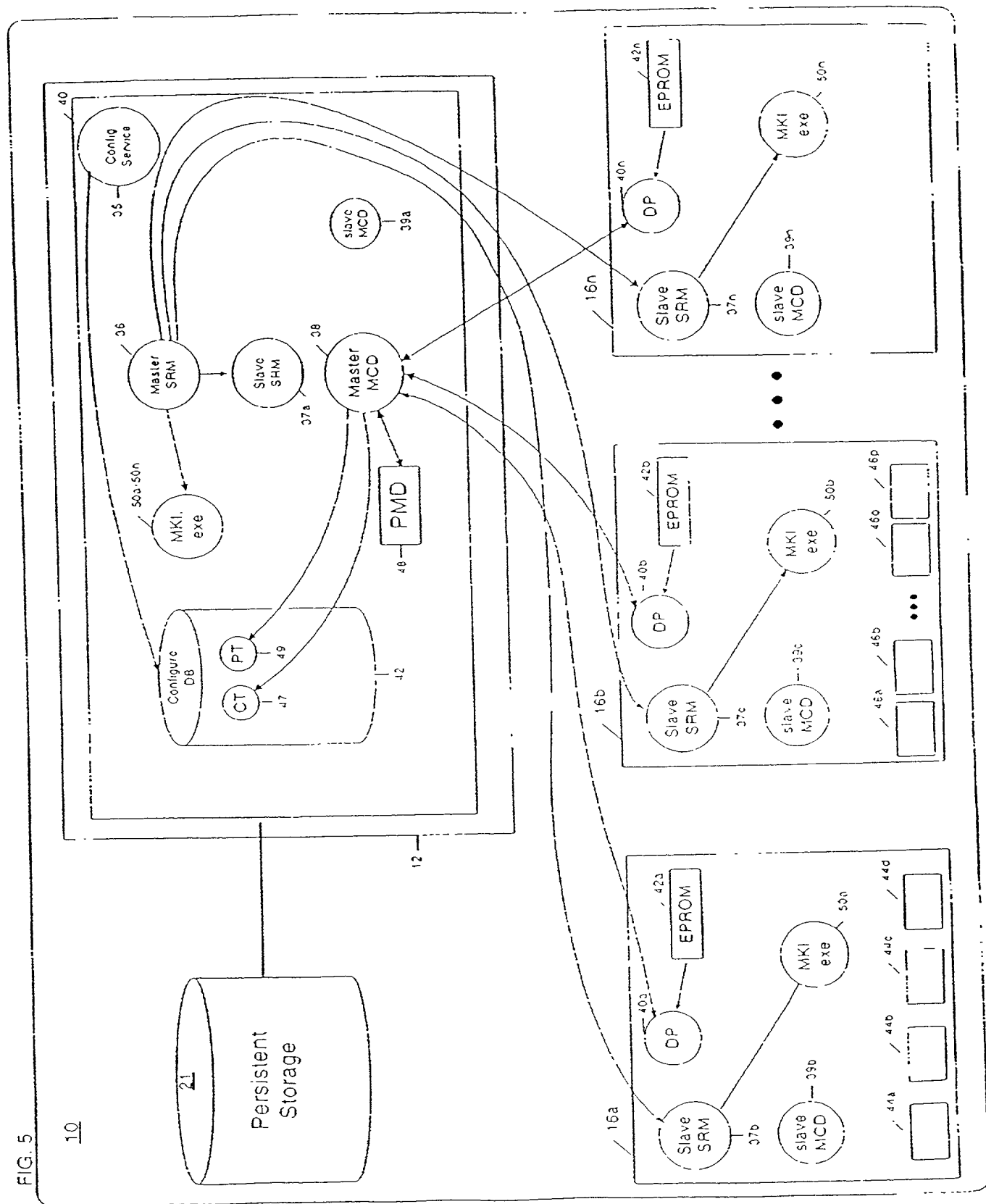


Fig. 4j

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FIG. 5



CARD TABLE

47

PID	CWD TYPE	VERSION NO.	SLOT NO.	...
16 a	500	0XF002	3	1
16 b	501	0XF002	4	2
	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮
16 e	505	0X6002	1	5
	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮
16 n	513	0XF002	1	12
	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮

FIG. 6

FIG. 8

10

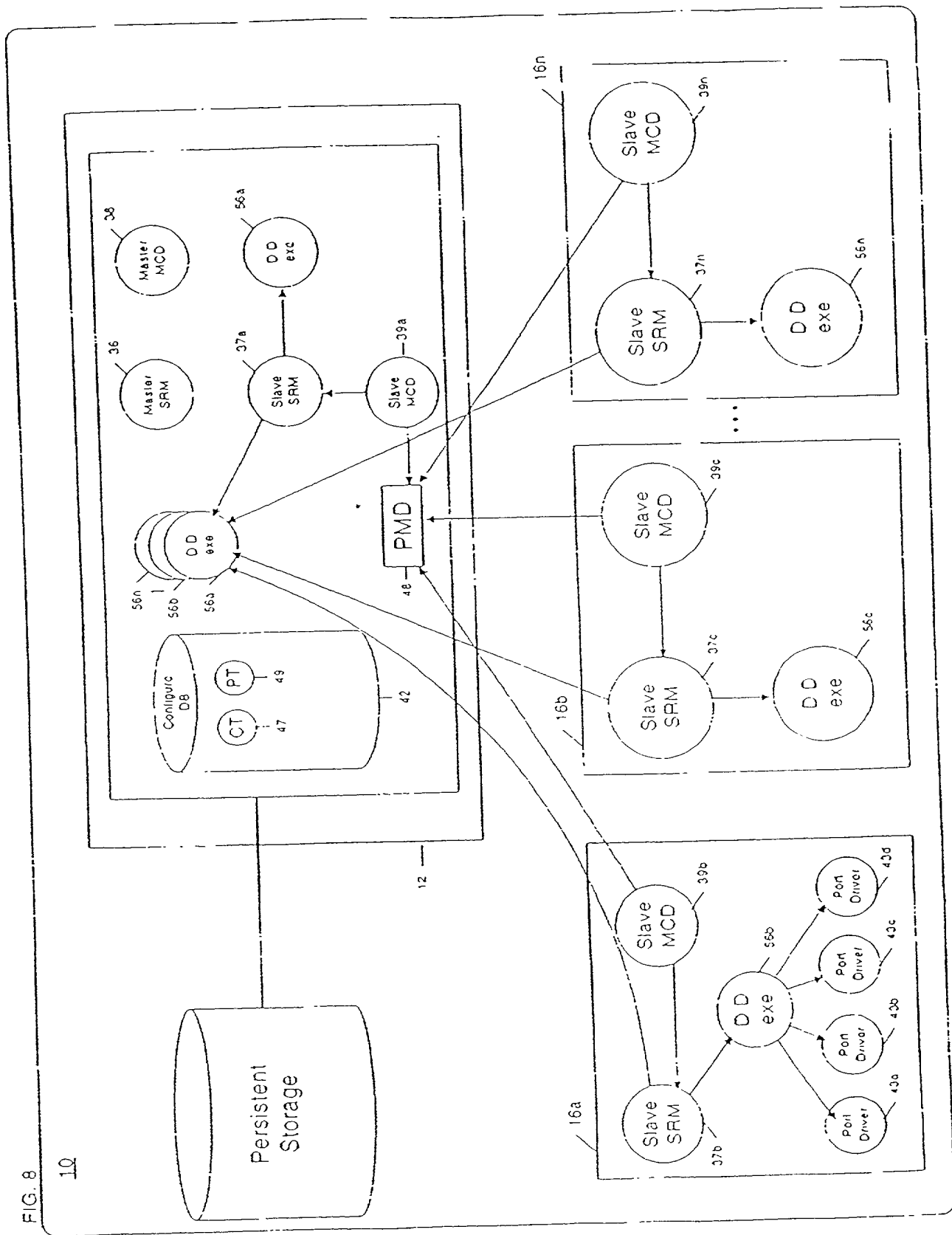


FIG. 9a

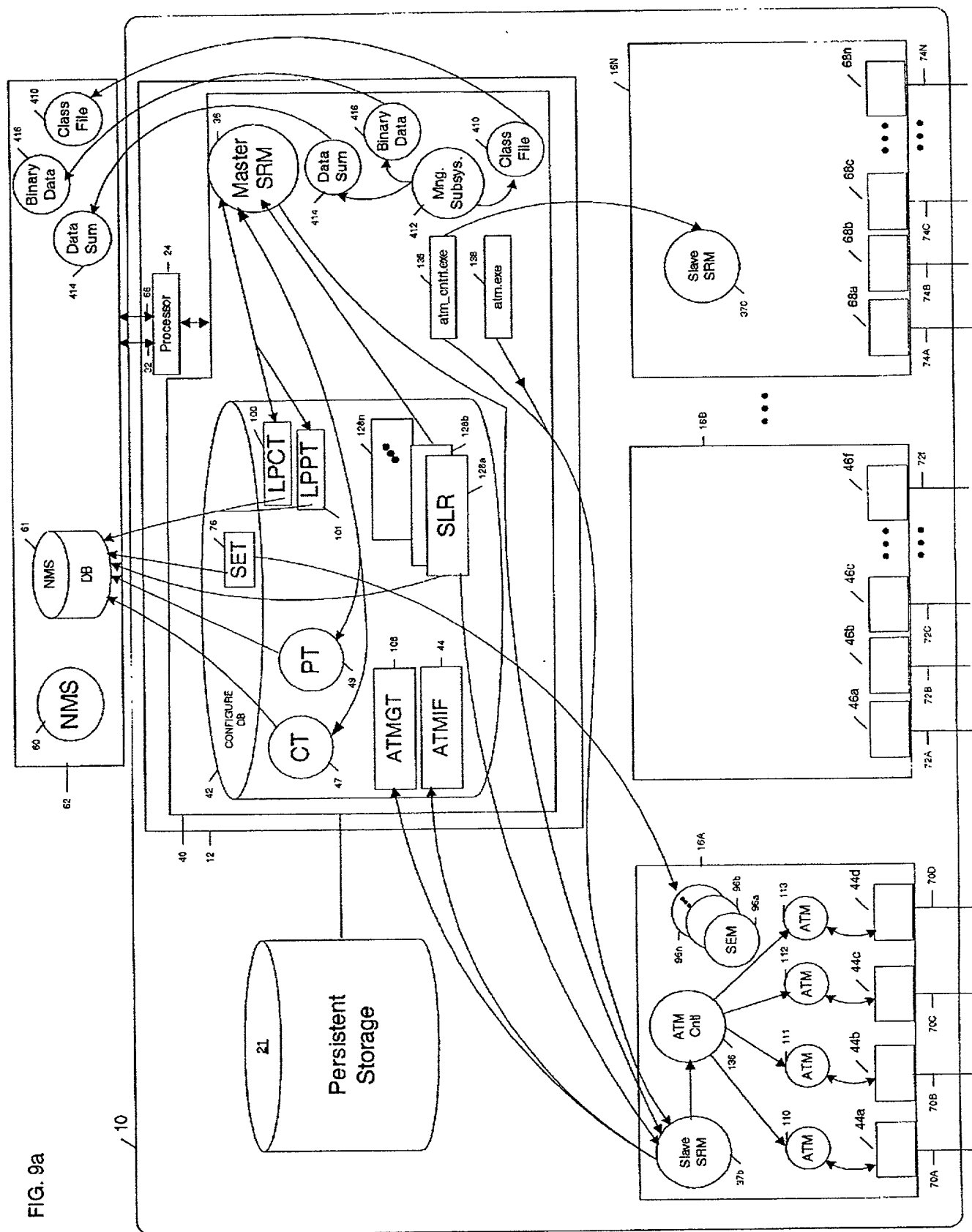


Fig. 9b

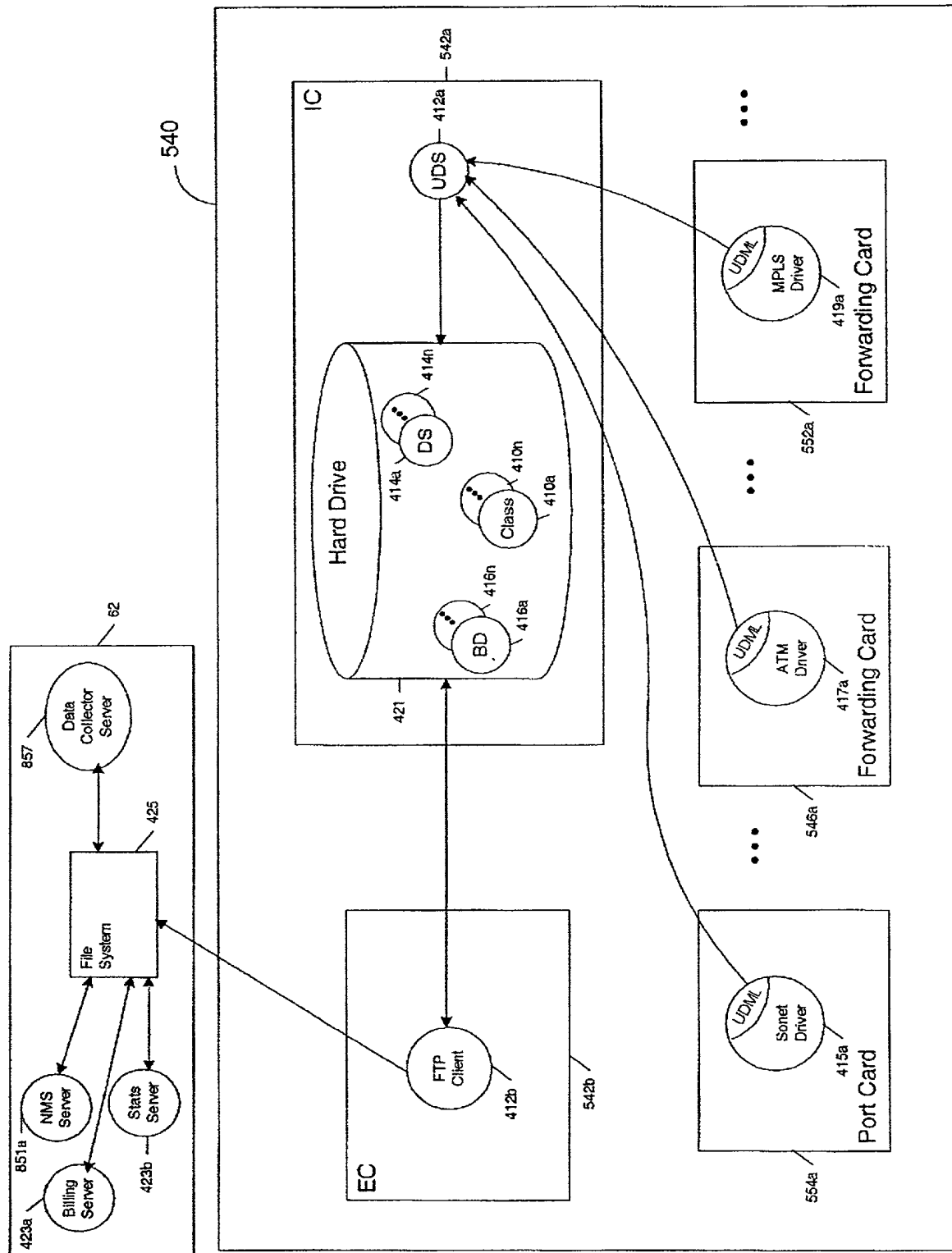


FIG. 10

Service Endpoint Table 76

	Service Endpoint #	Port PID
78	1	1500
80	2	1501
82	3	1501
84	4	1501
86	5	1502
88	6	1502
90	7	1503
92	8	1503
94	9	1503
168	10	1502
	⋮	⋮

FIG. 11a

Logical to Physical Card Table 100

	98 LID	102 Primary PID	104 Back-up PID
106	30	500	513
109	31	501	513
	⋮	⋮	⋮

FIG. 11b

Logical to Physical Port Table 101

	98 LID	102 Primary PID	104 Back-up PID
107	40	1500	1600
	⋮	⋮	⋮

FIG. 12

ATM Group Table 108

Group #	Card LID	...
1	30	
2	30	
3	30	
4	30	

FIG. 13

ATM Interface Table 114

ATM IF	ATM Group	SE	...
1	1	1	
2	1	1	
3	1	1	
4	2	2	
5	2	3	
6	2	4	
⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮
12	3	10	
⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮

FIG. 14

Software Load Record 128a

130	Control Shim	LID	132
134	alm-cntl.exe	30	

FIG. 15

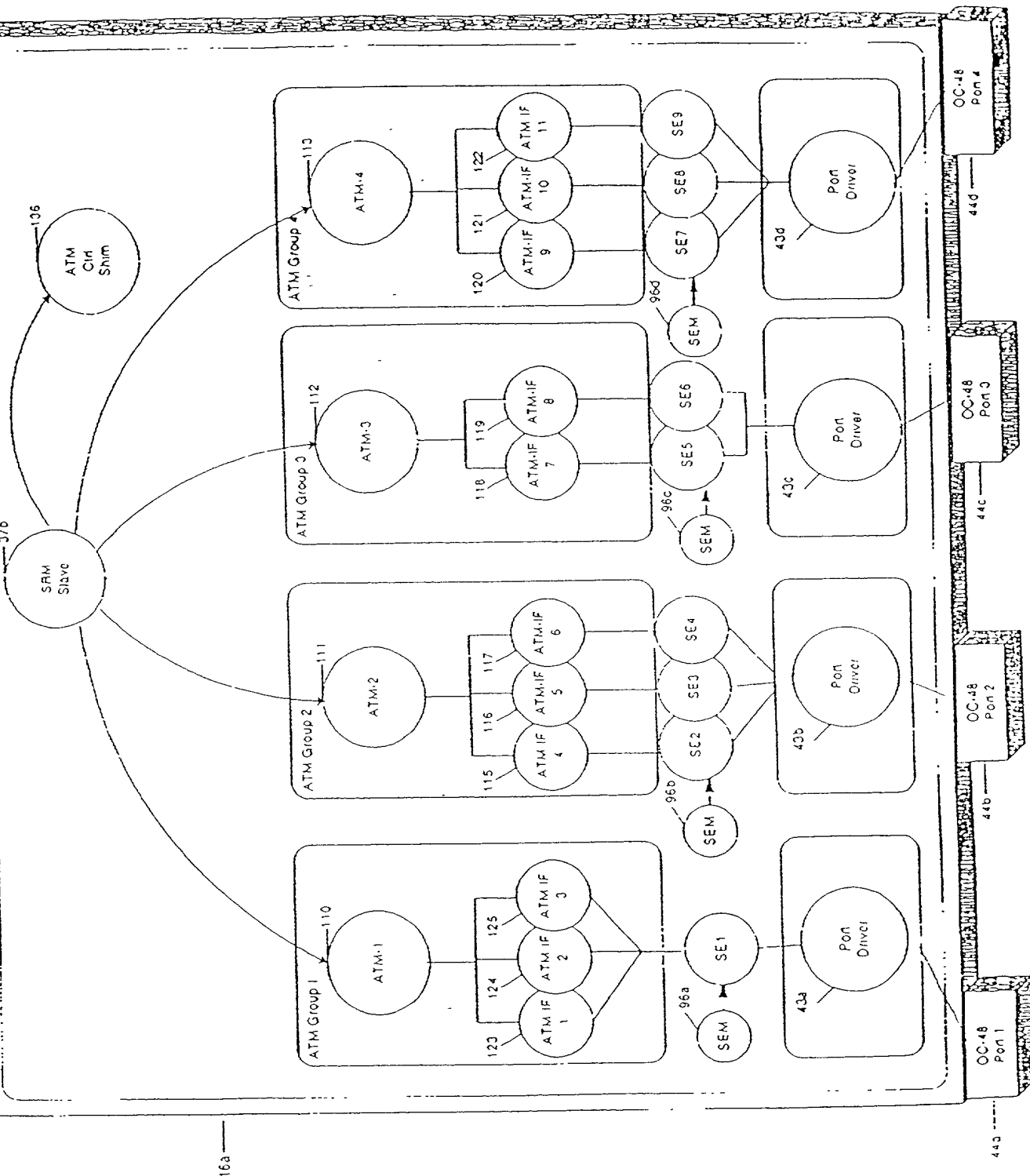


FIG. 16a

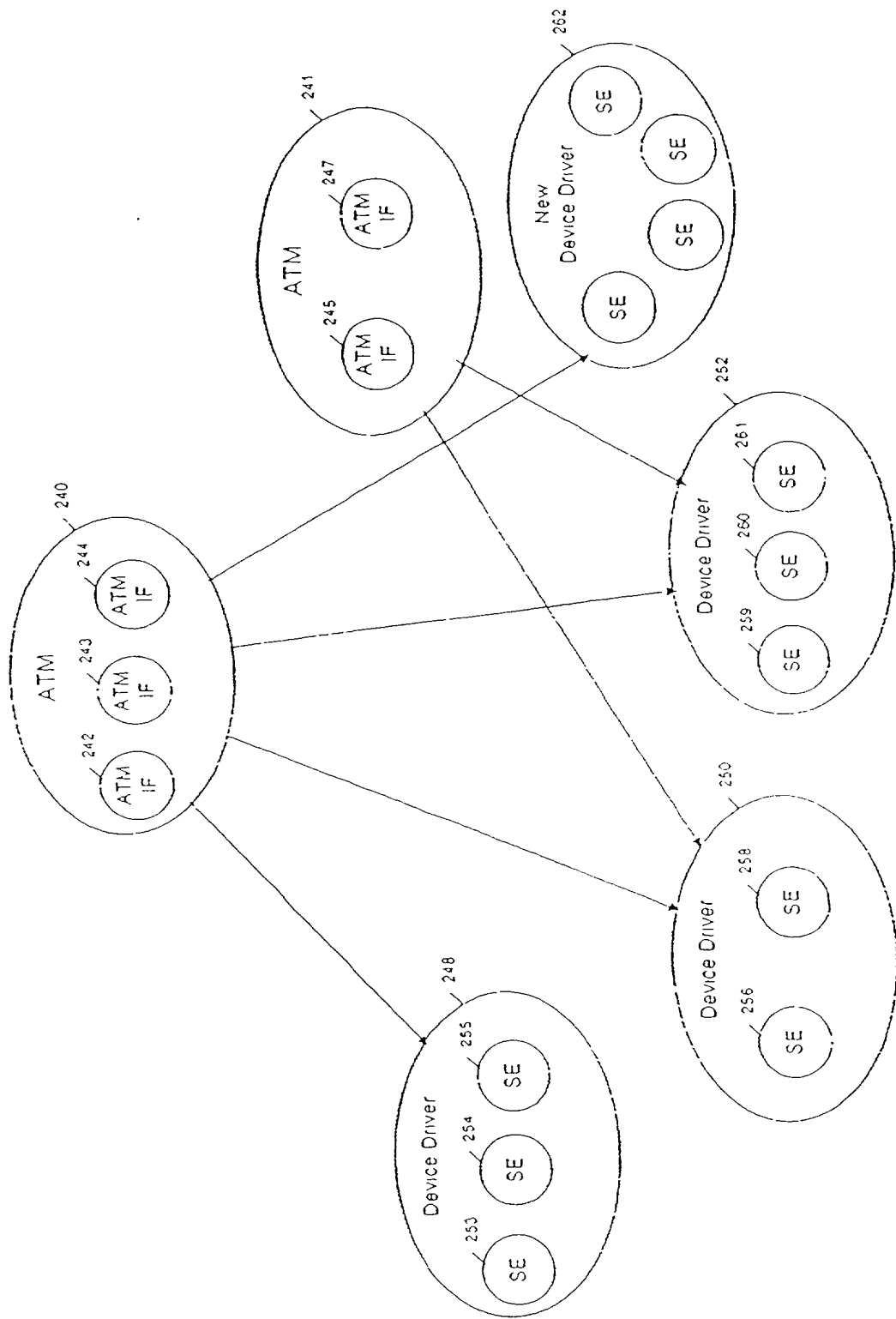


FIG. 16b

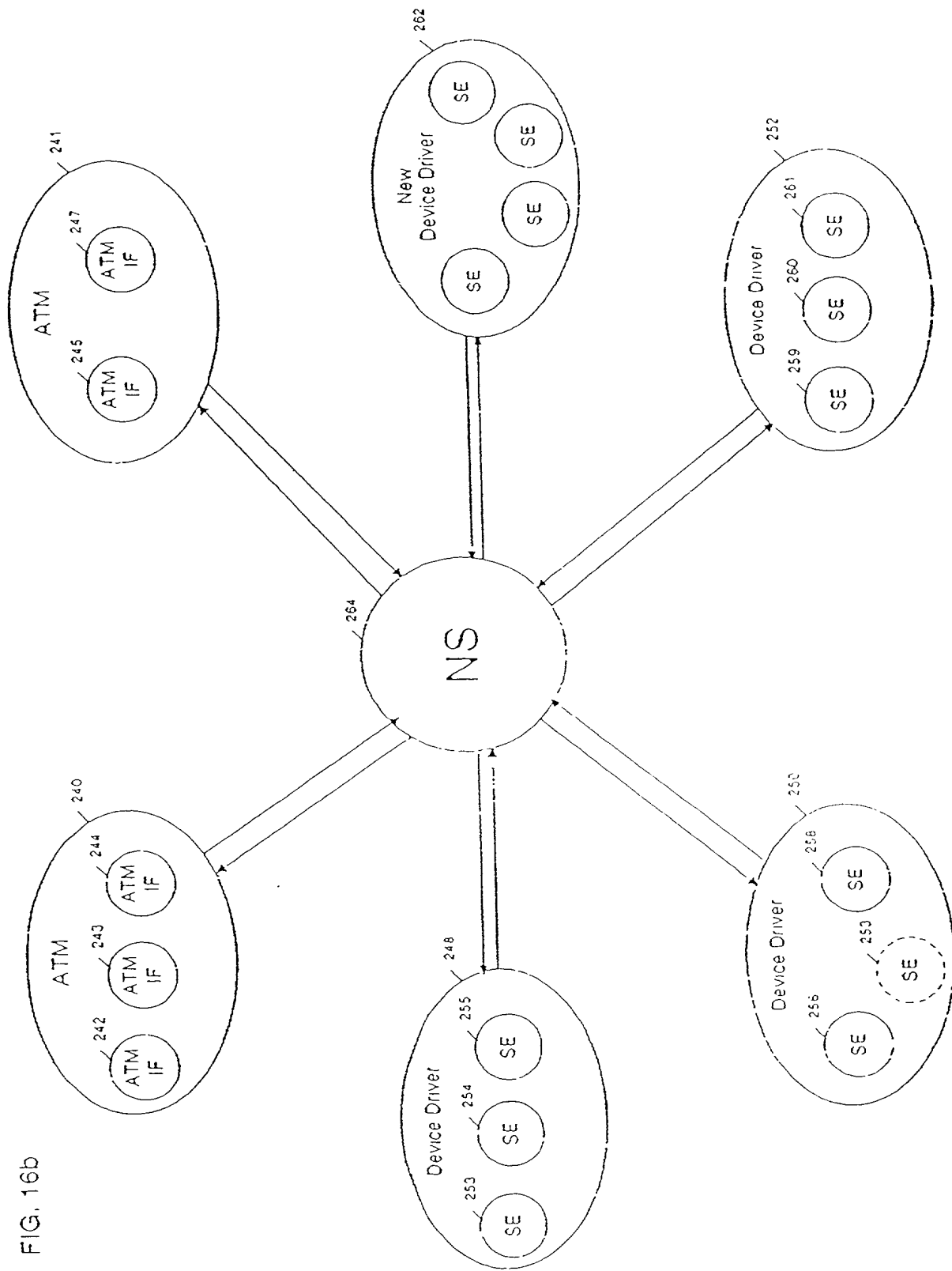
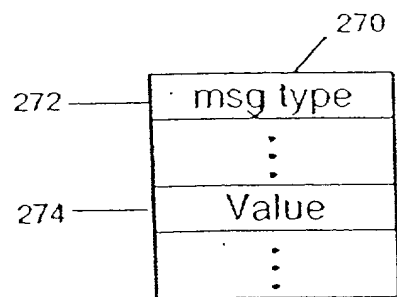


FIG 16d



001120-0024E50

FIG. 17

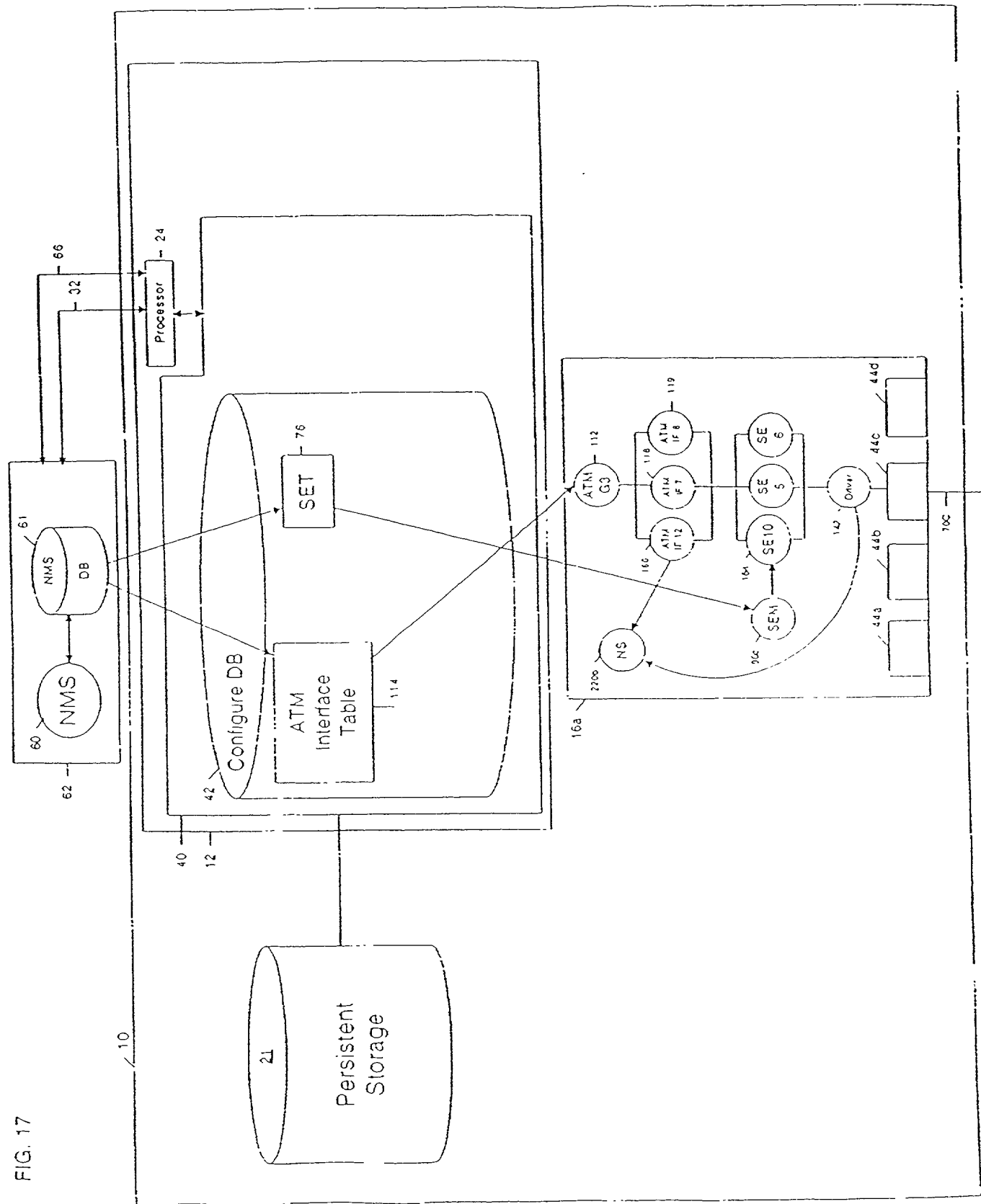


FIG. 21

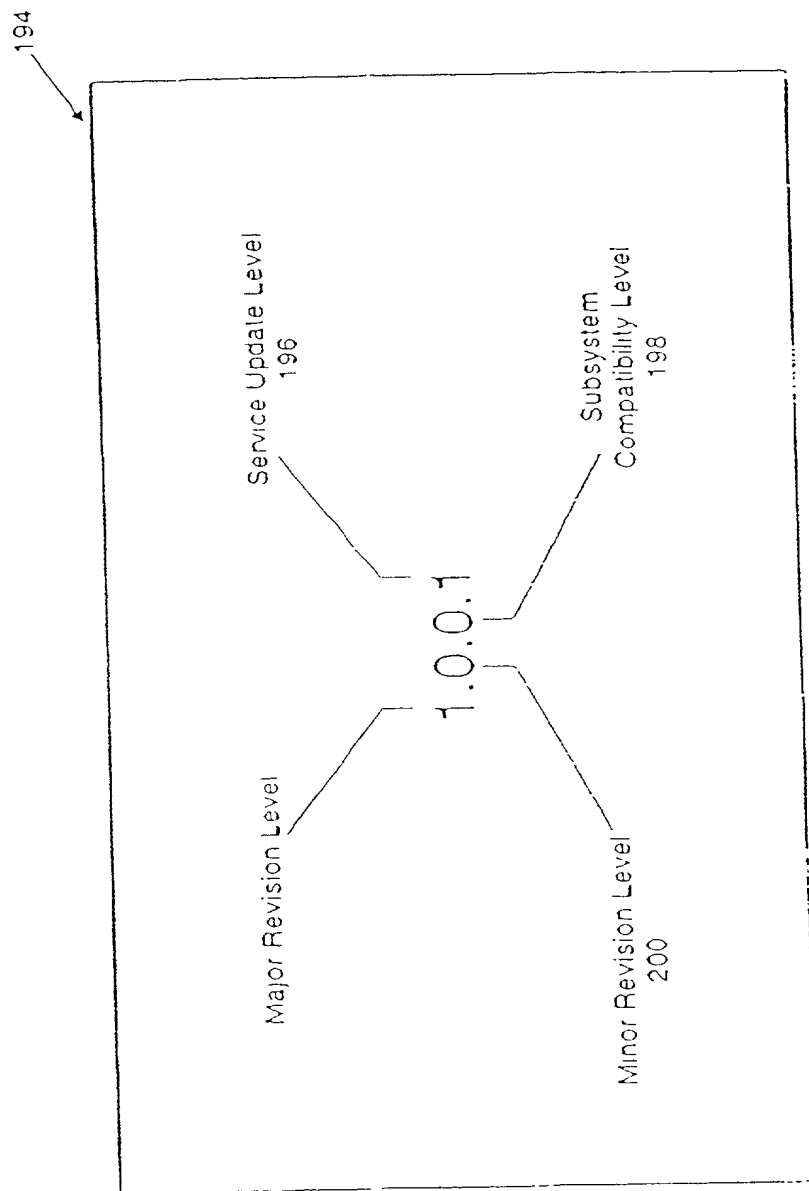


FIG. 22

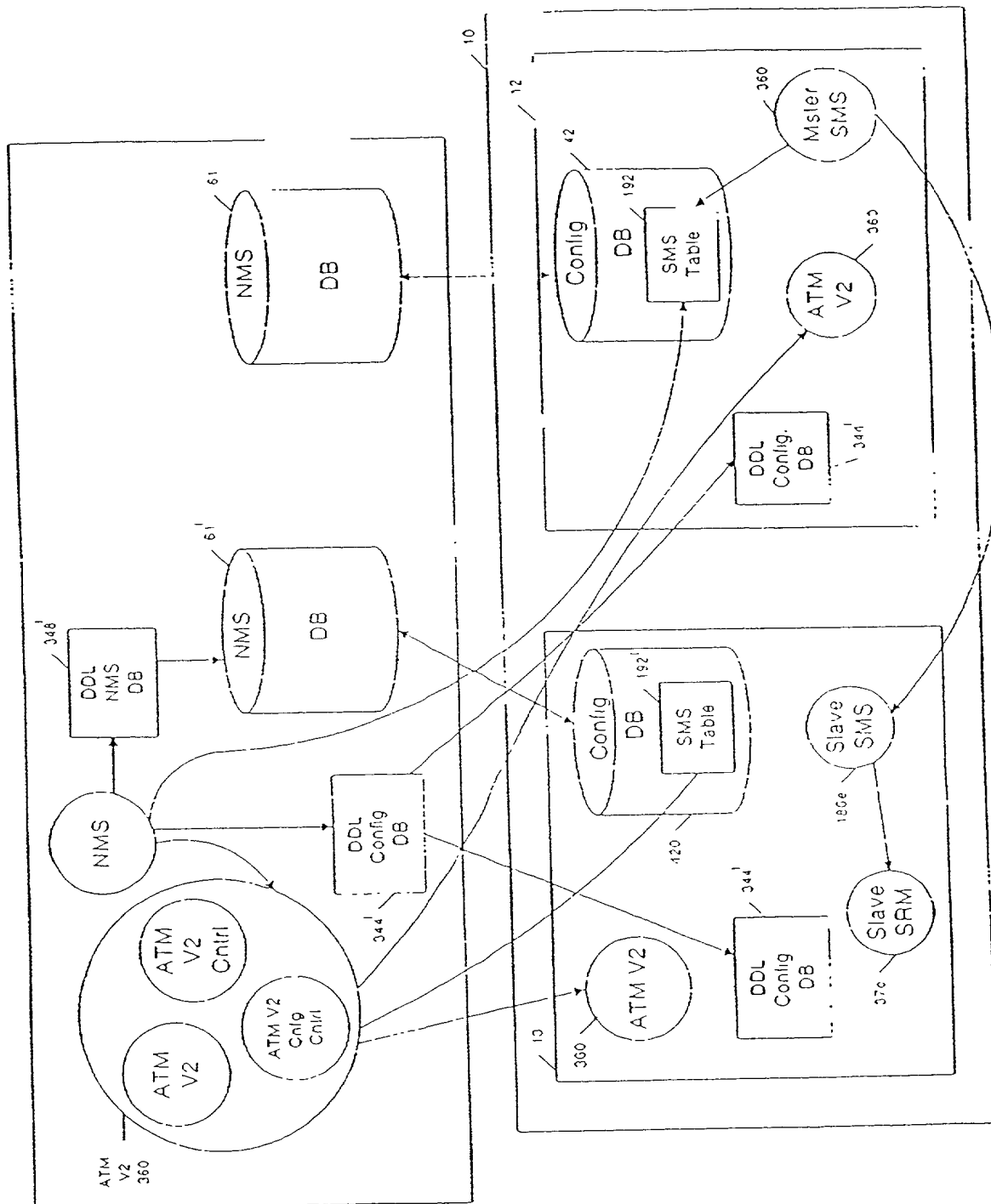


FIG. 23

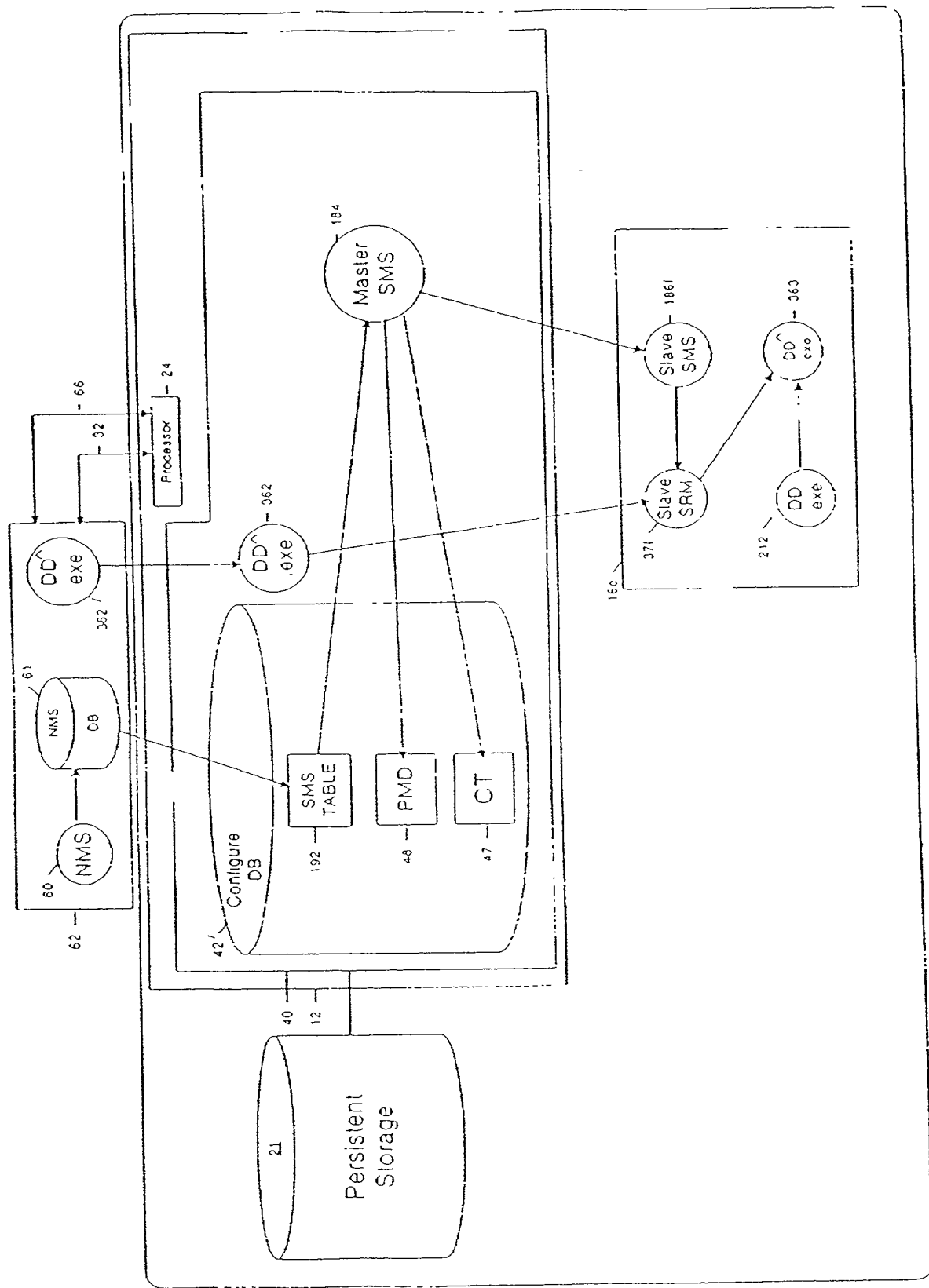


FIG. 24

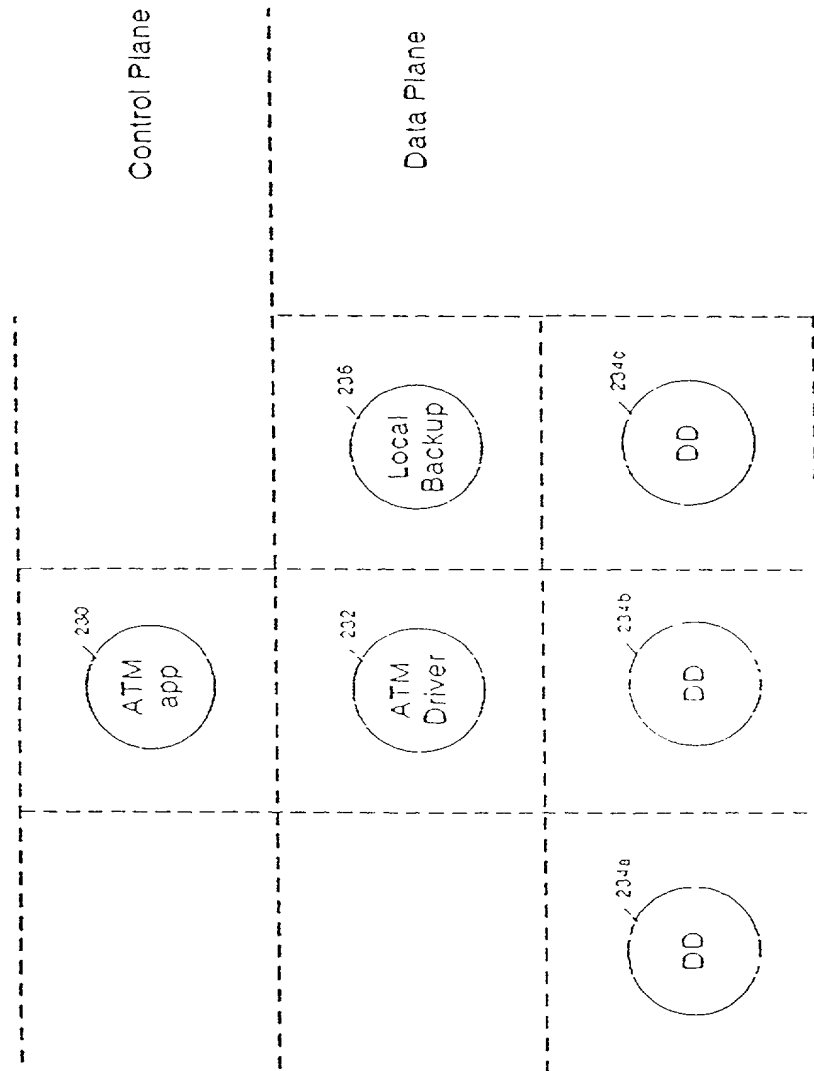


FIG. 25.

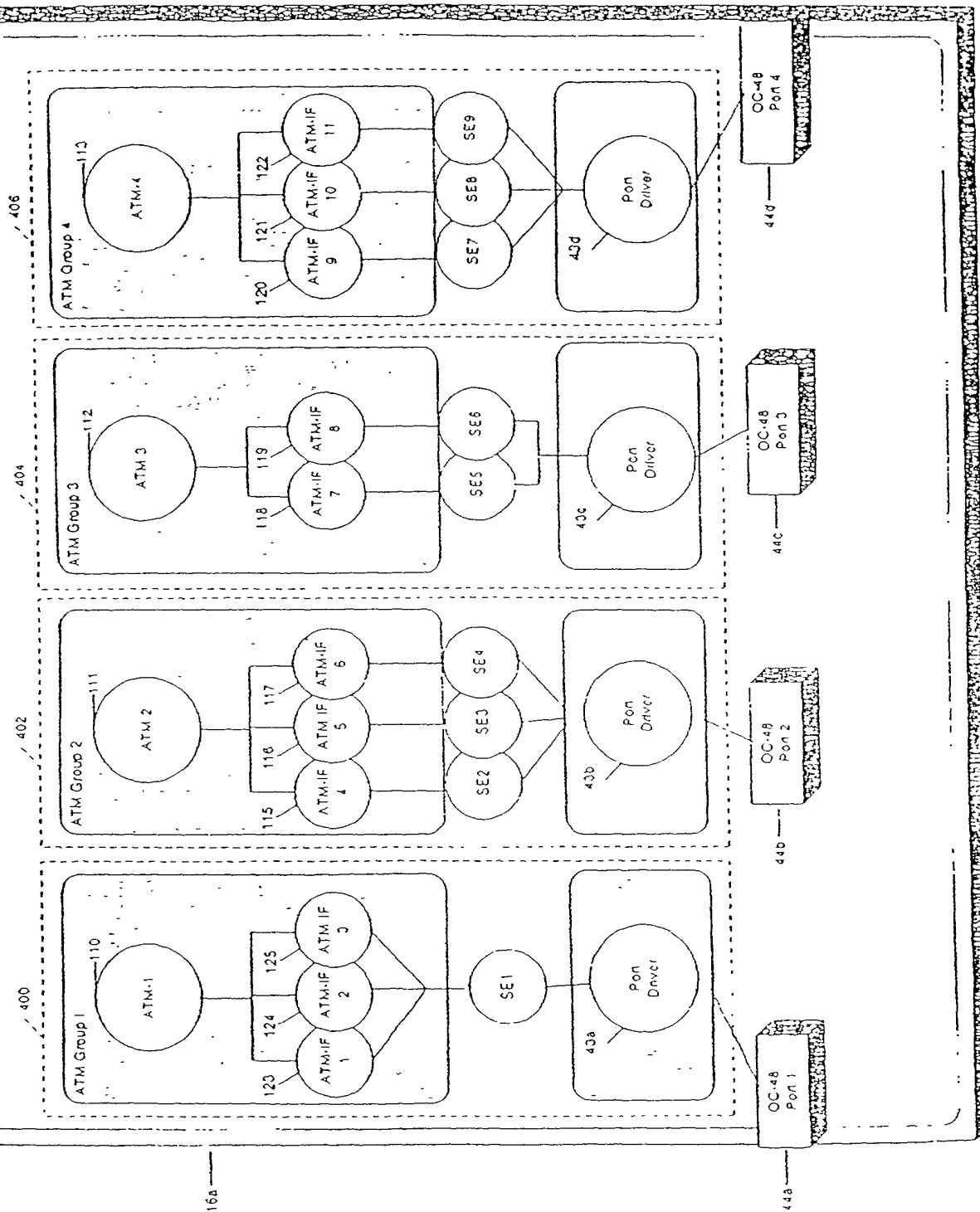


FIG. 26

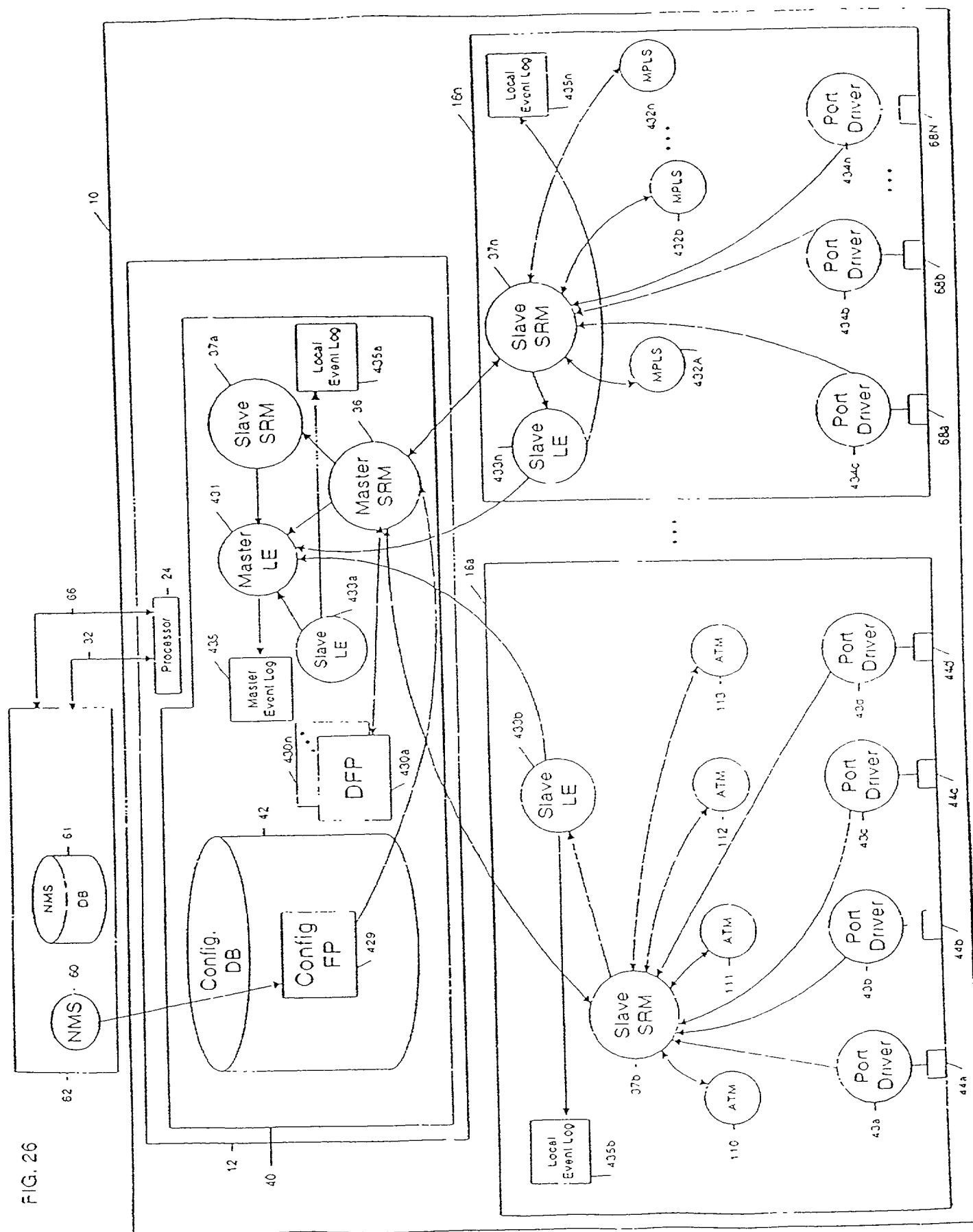


FIG. 27

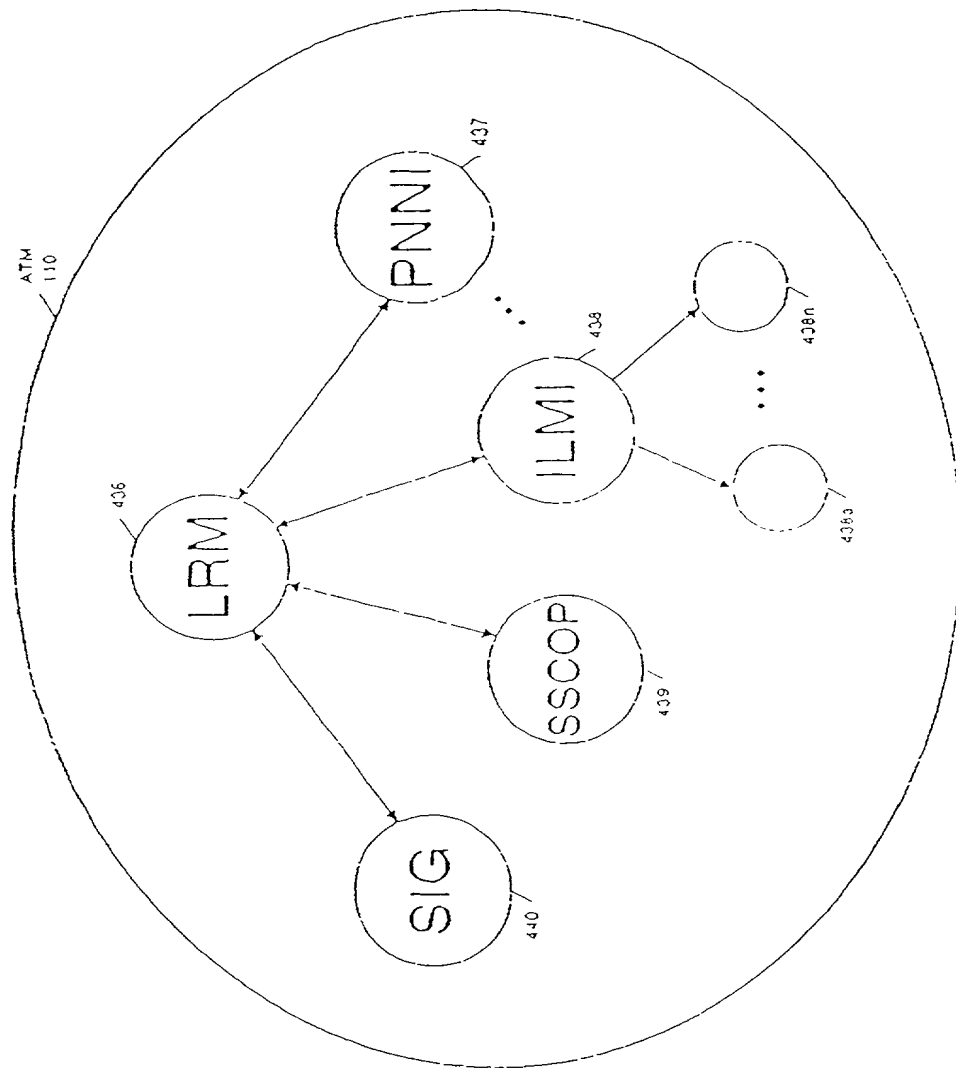


FIG. 28

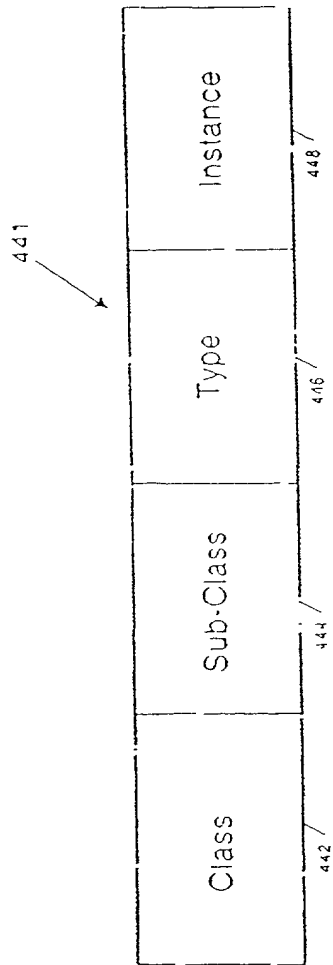


FIG. 29

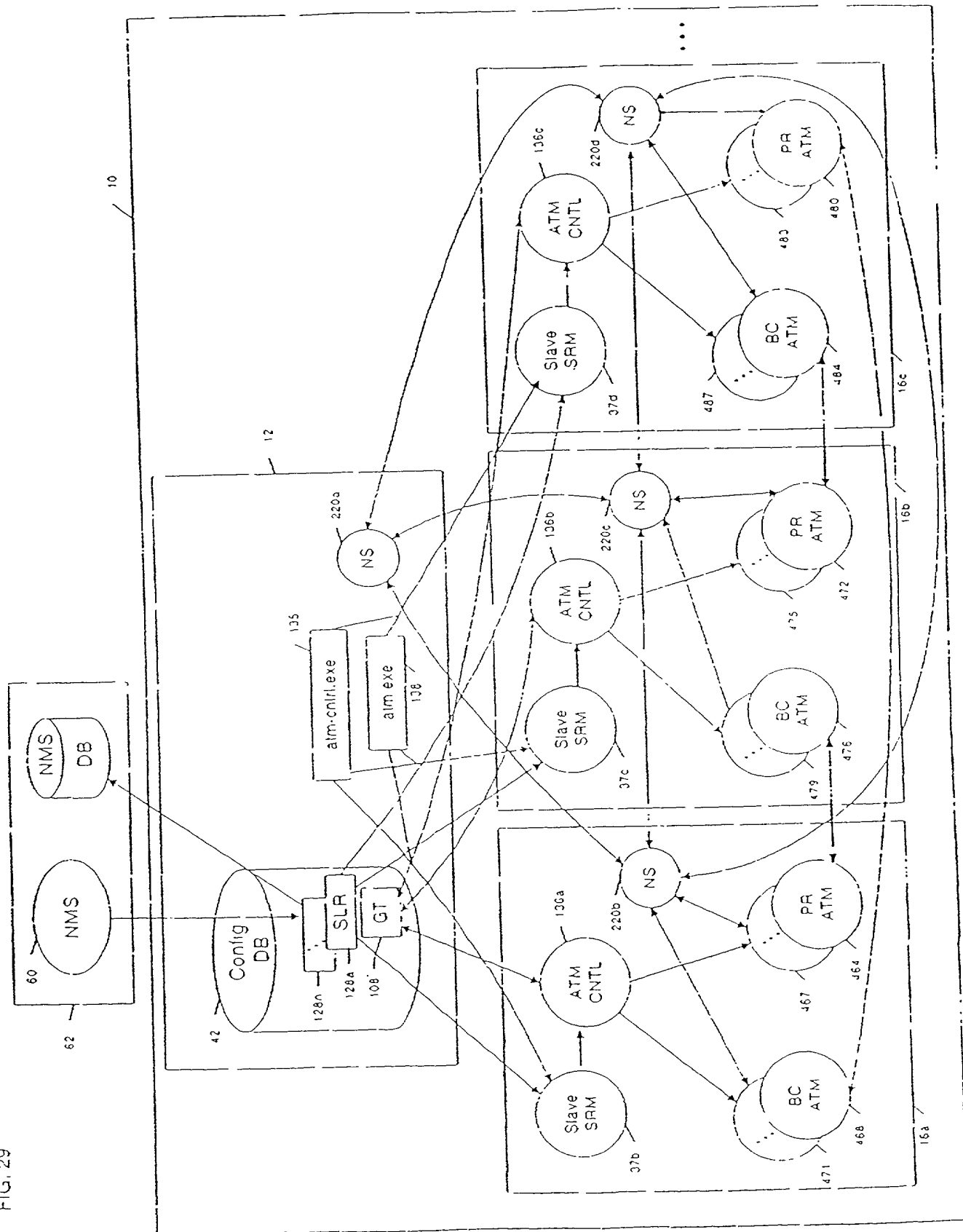


FIG 30

Group Table 108'

		447	449	
	Group #	Primary Card LID	Backup Card LID	...
450	1	30	31	
451	2	30	31	
452	3	30	31	
453	4	30	31	
454	5	31	32	
455	6	31	32	
456	7	31	32	
457	8	31	32	
458	9	32	30	
459	10	32	30	
460	11	32	30	
461	12	32	30	
	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮

001120"0082E950

Fig. 31a

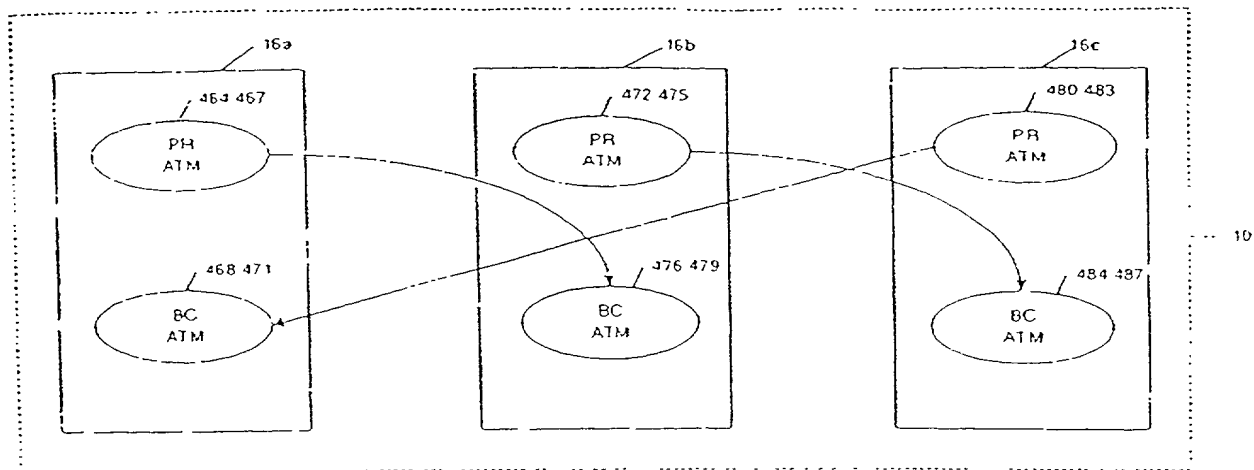


Fig. 31b

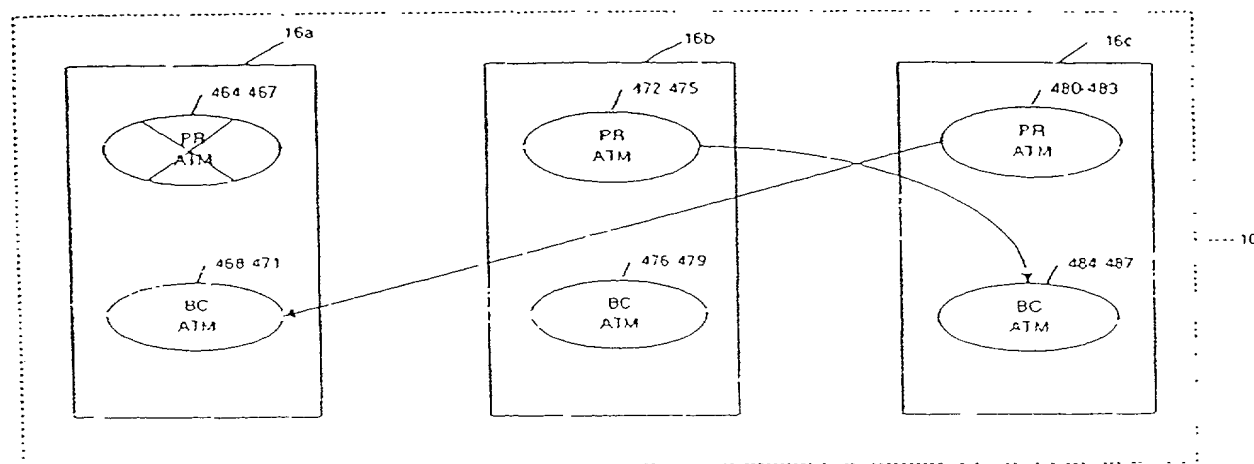


Fig. 31c

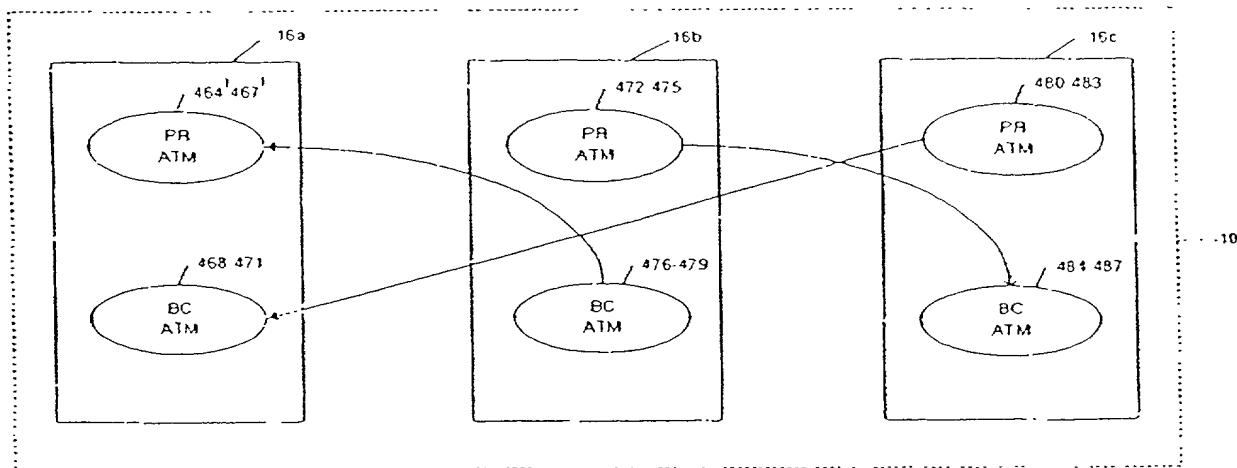


Fig. 32a

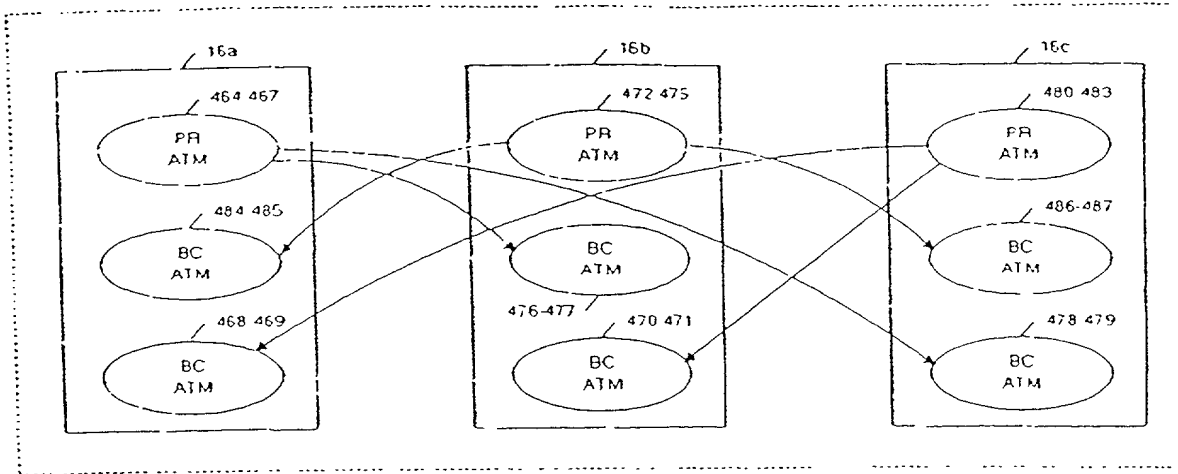


Fig. 32b

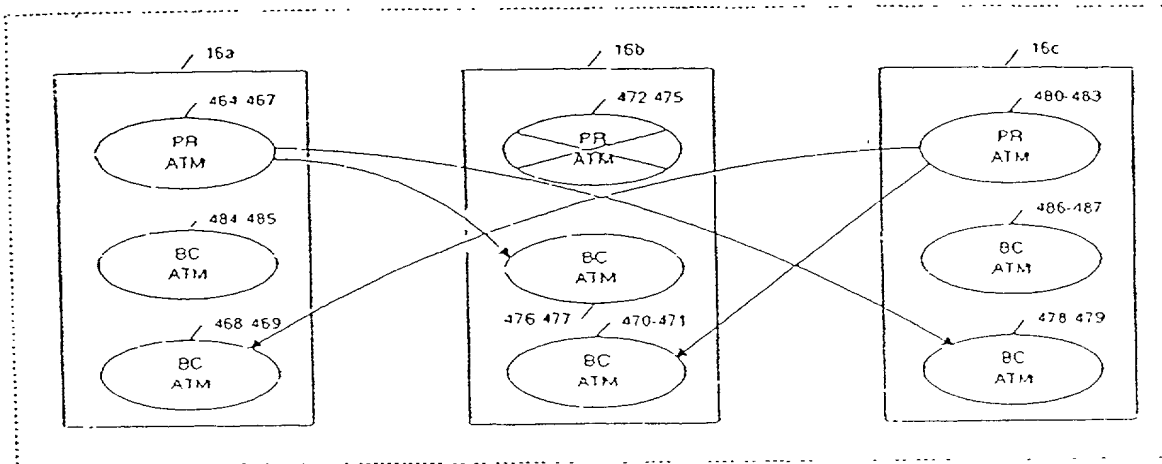


Fig. 32c

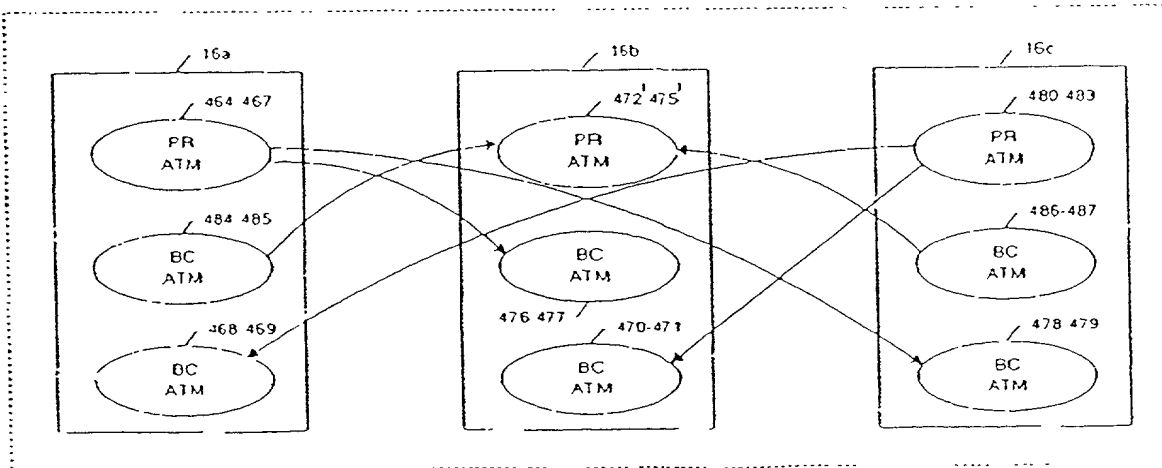


FIG. 33a

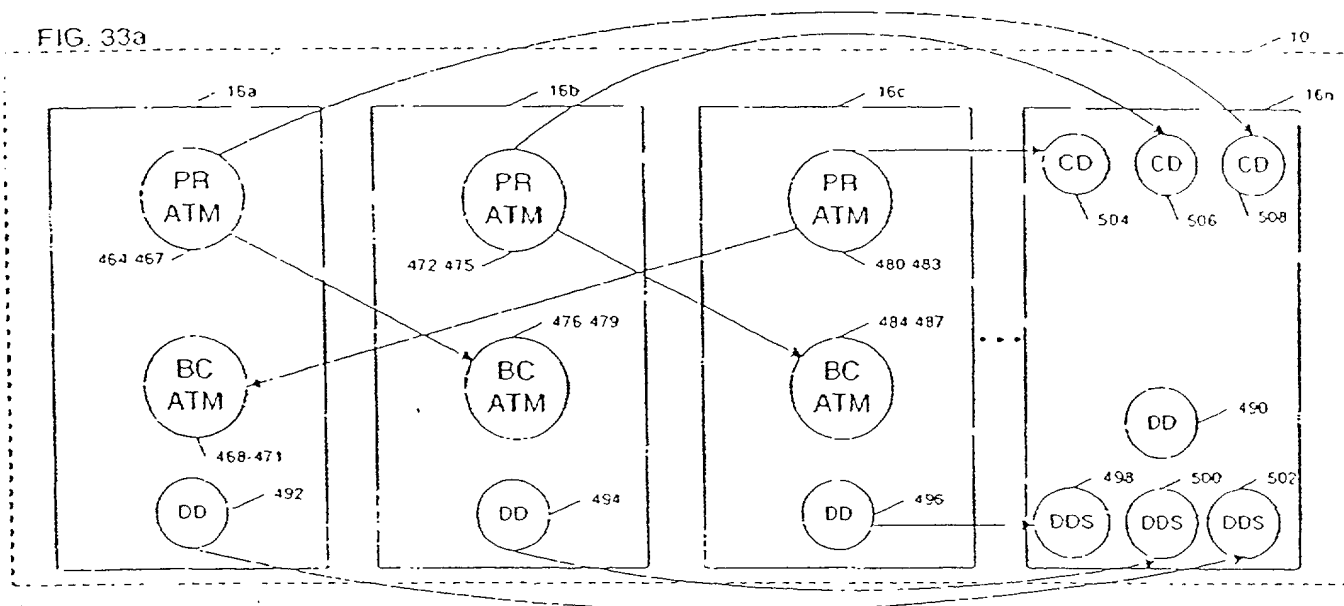


FIG. 33b

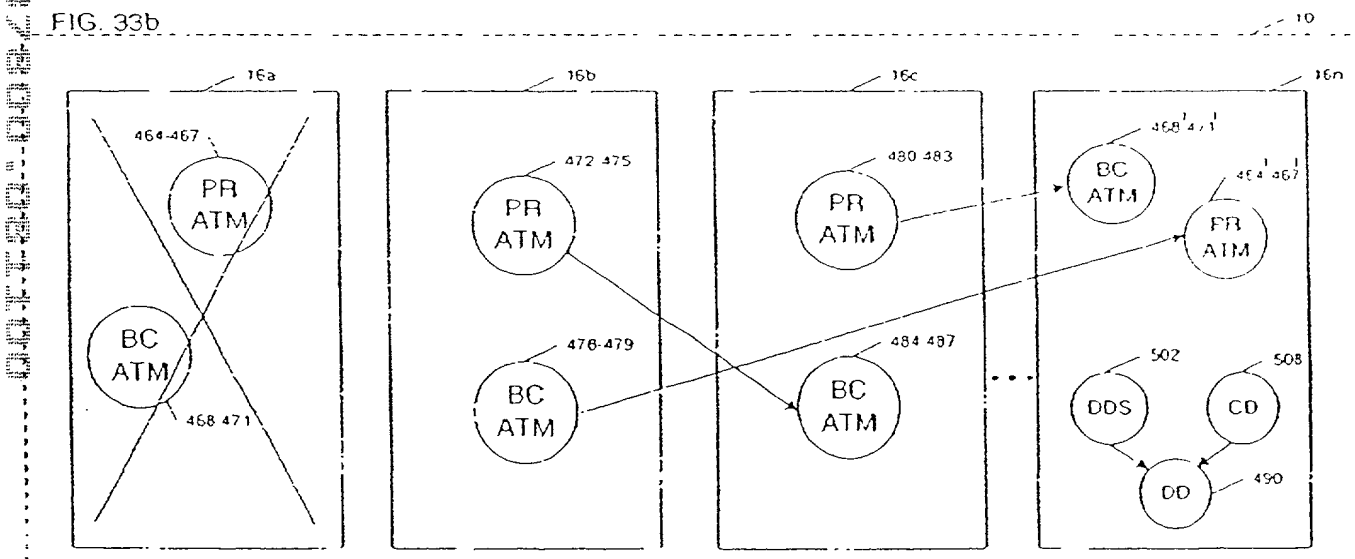


FIG. 33c

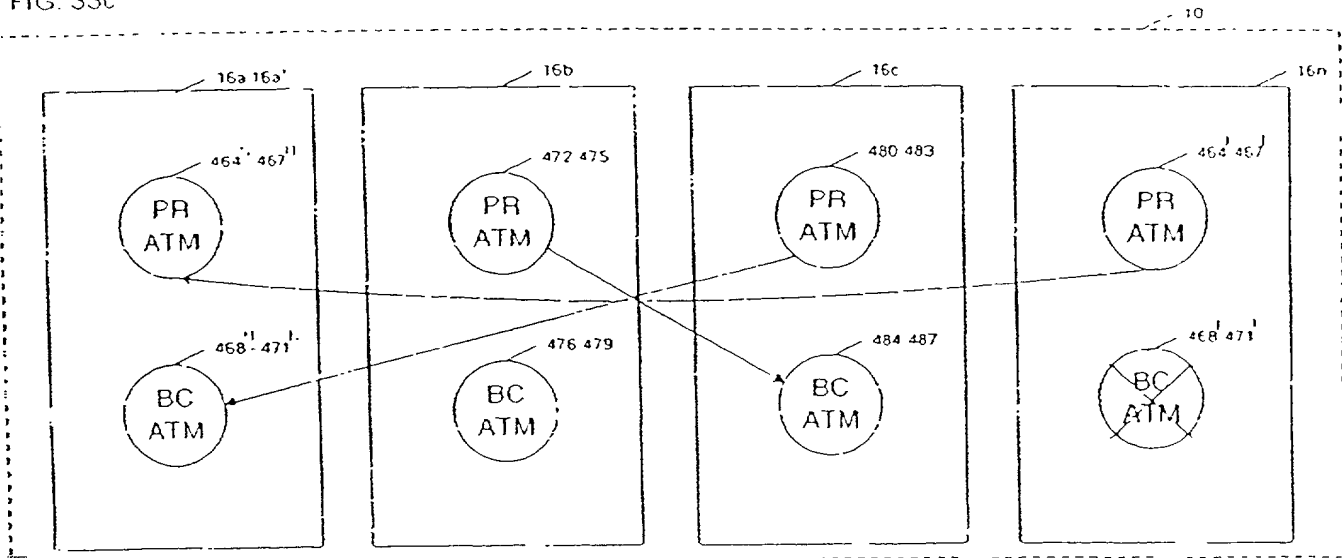


FIG. 33d

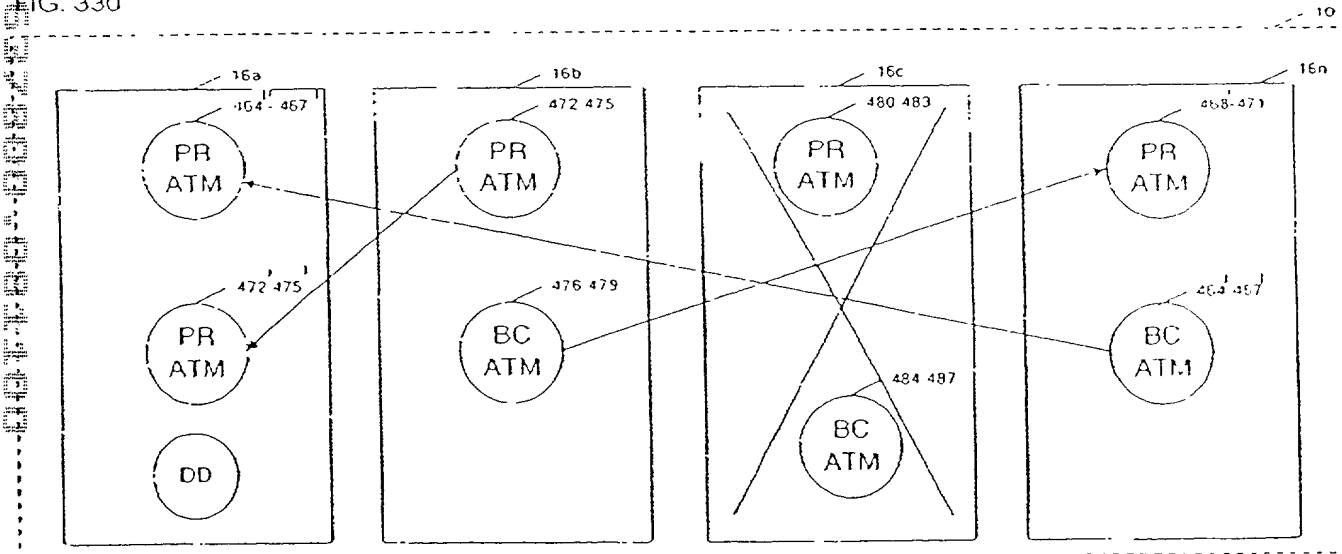


Fig. 34a

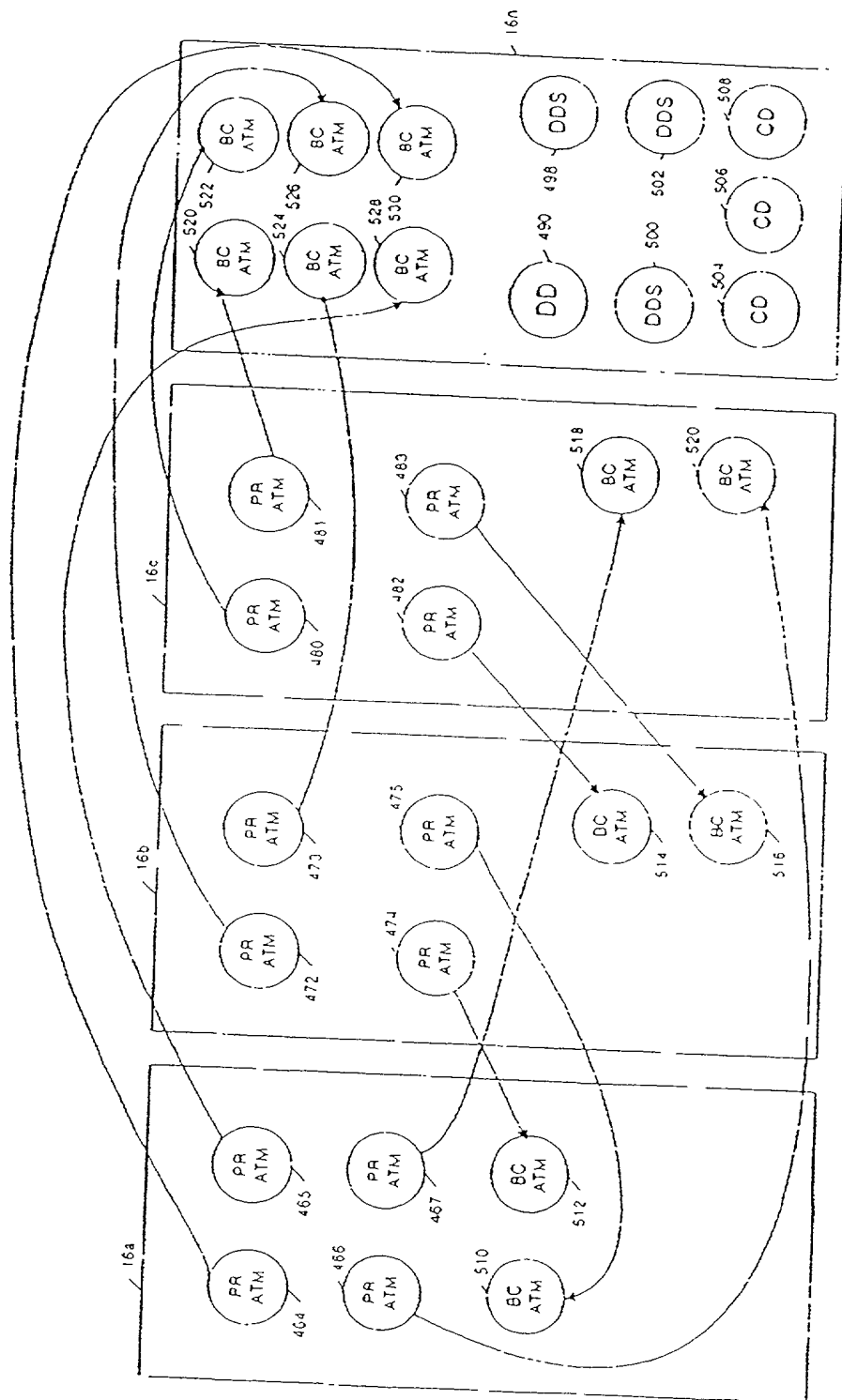


FIG. 34b

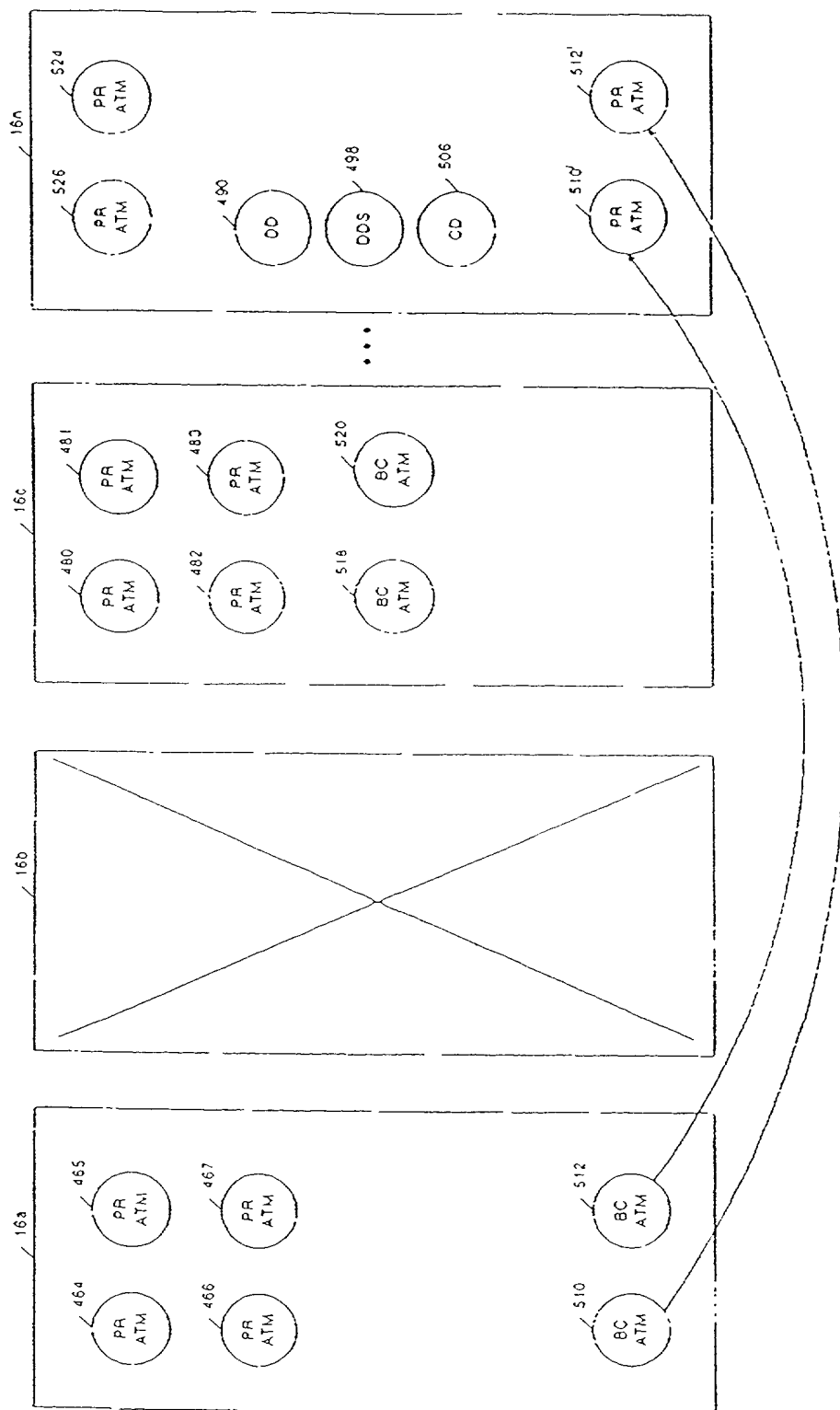
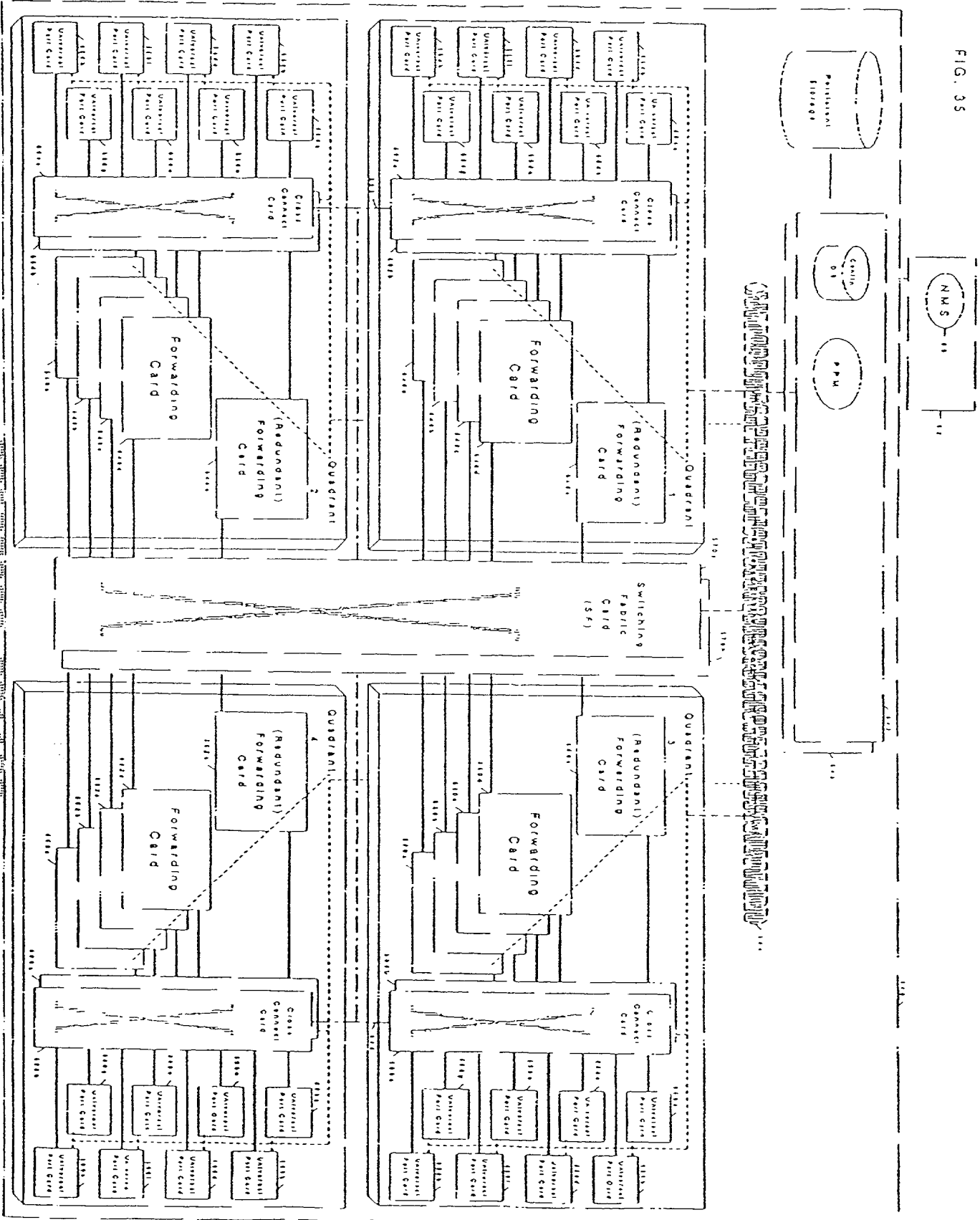
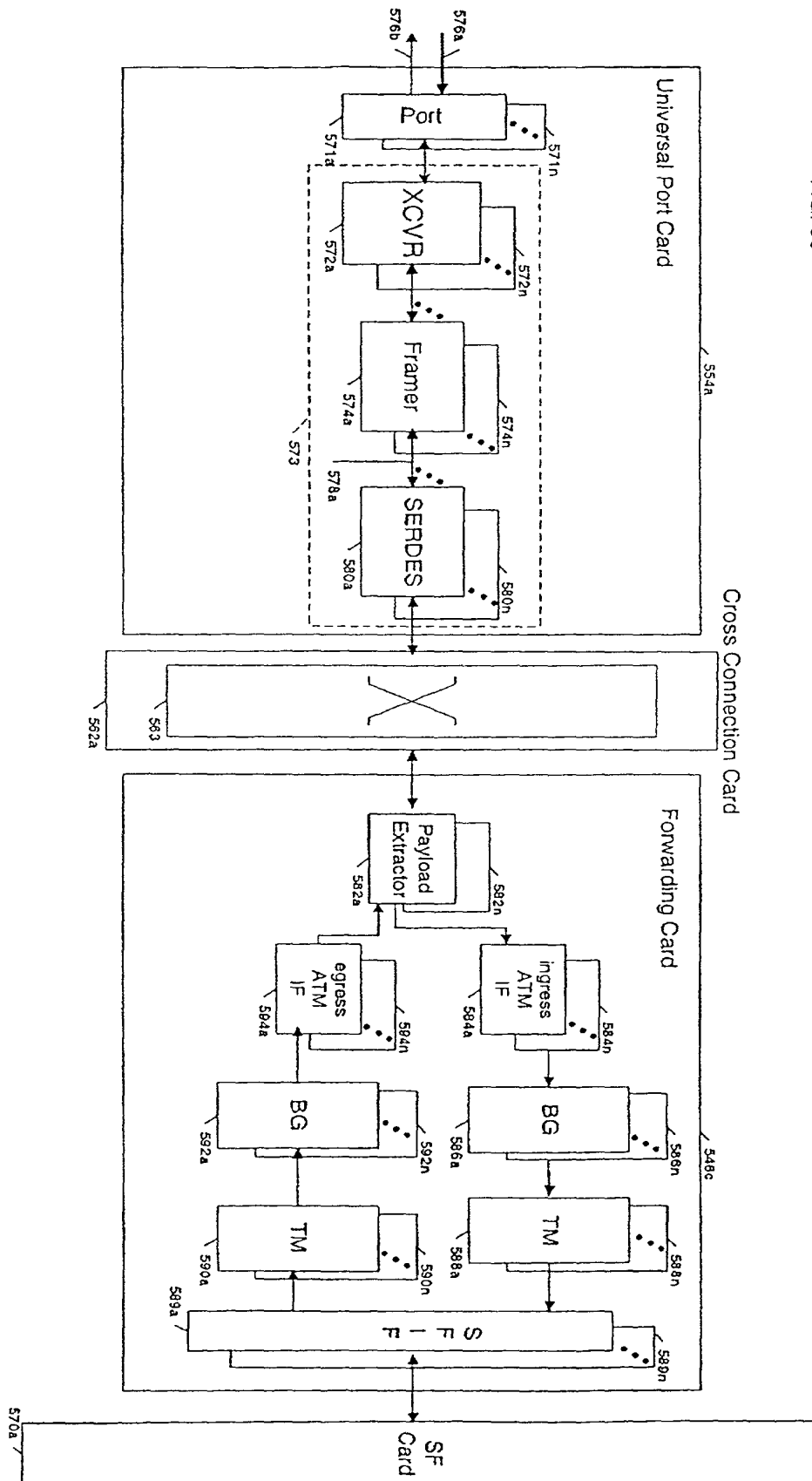


FIG. 35



Doc 7200 in Detail

FIG. 36



09637800.021.100

FIG. 37

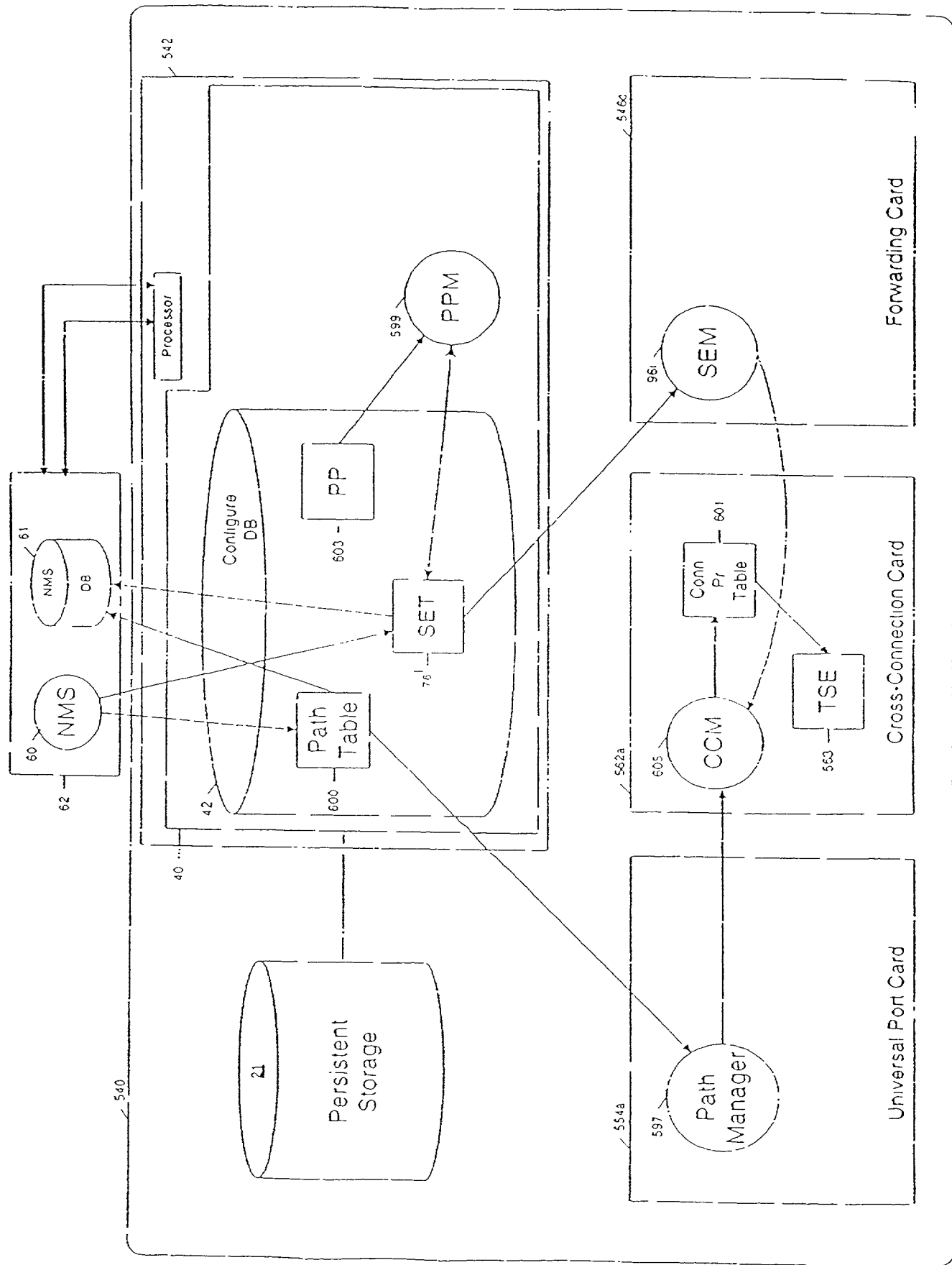


FIG. 38

Path Table 600



602

Path LID	UP Port LID	Time Slot	# of Time Slots	...
1666	1231	4	3	
:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:

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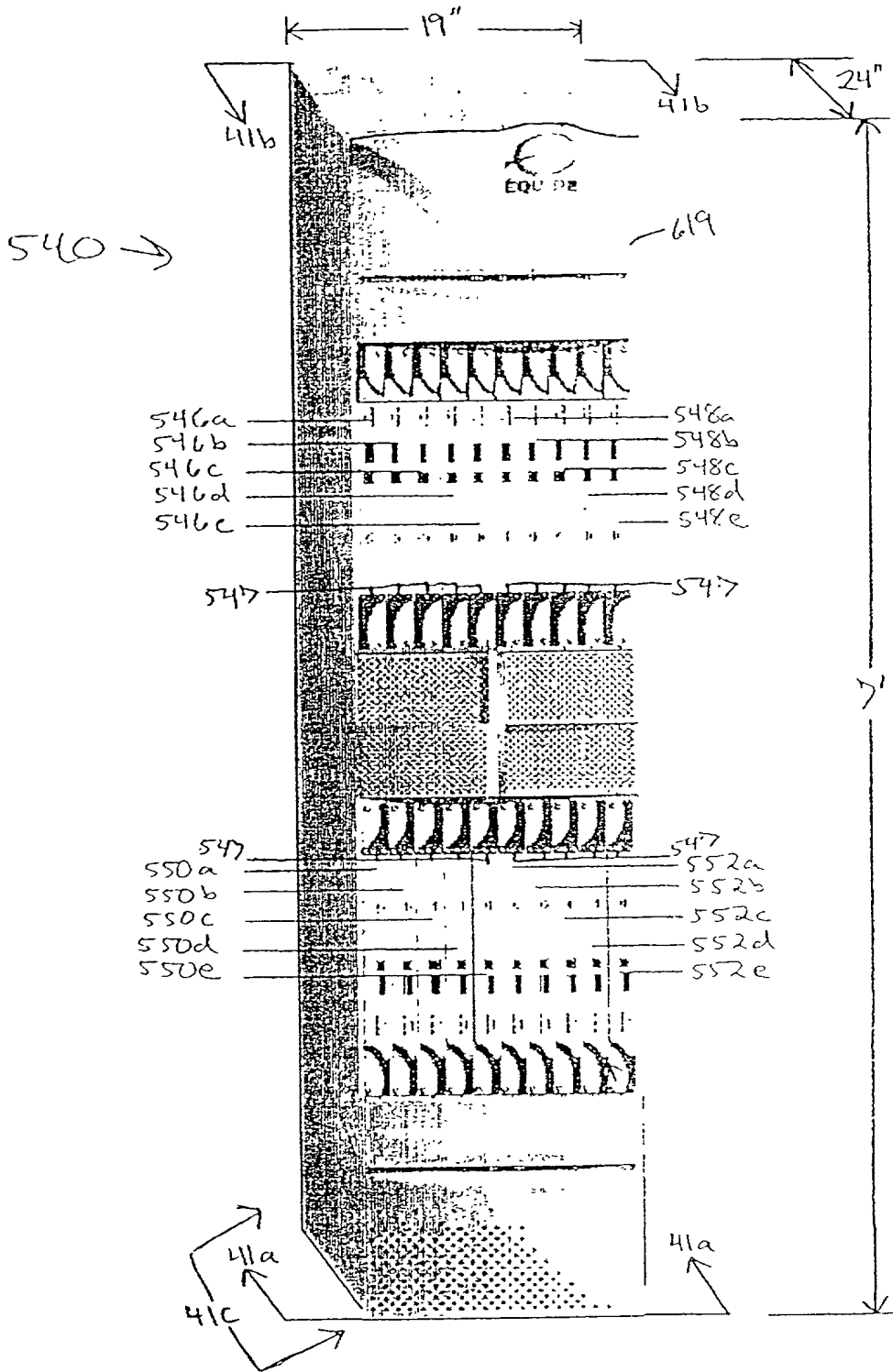


Fig. 40

FIG. 41a

Front

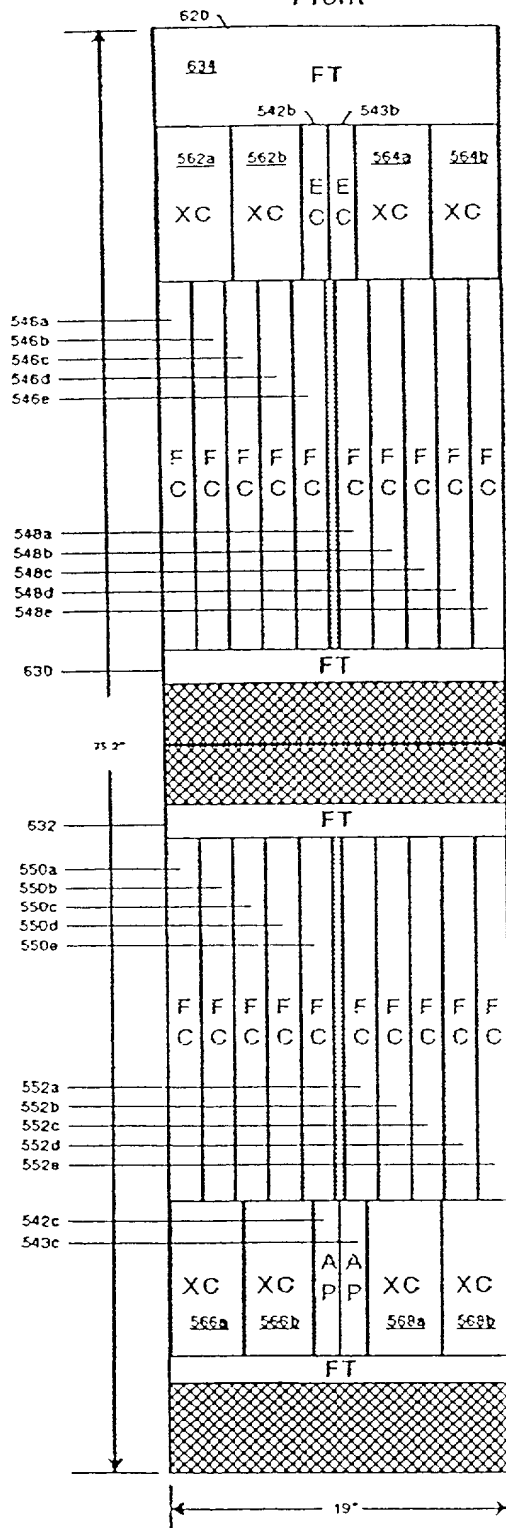
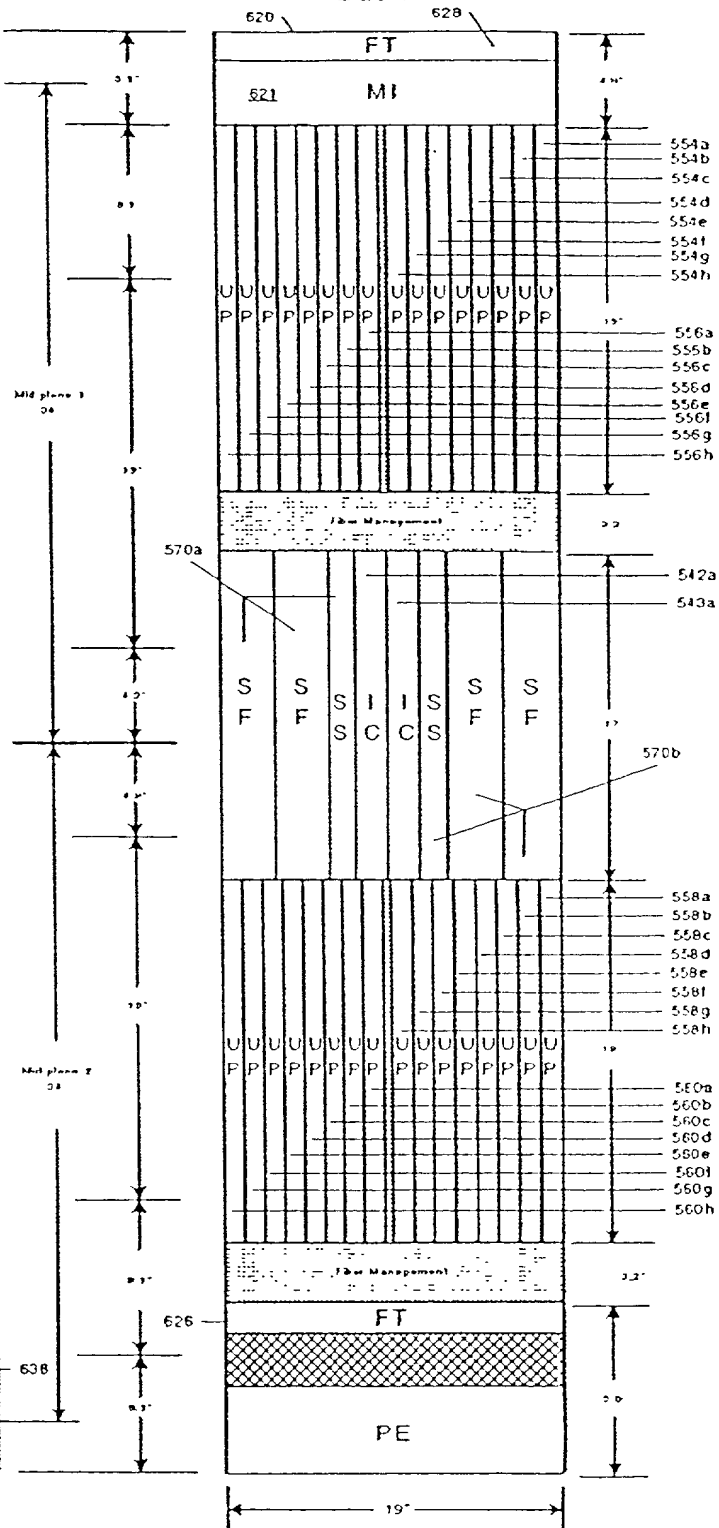


FIG. 41b

Back



001180" 00242560

FIG. 41c

Side

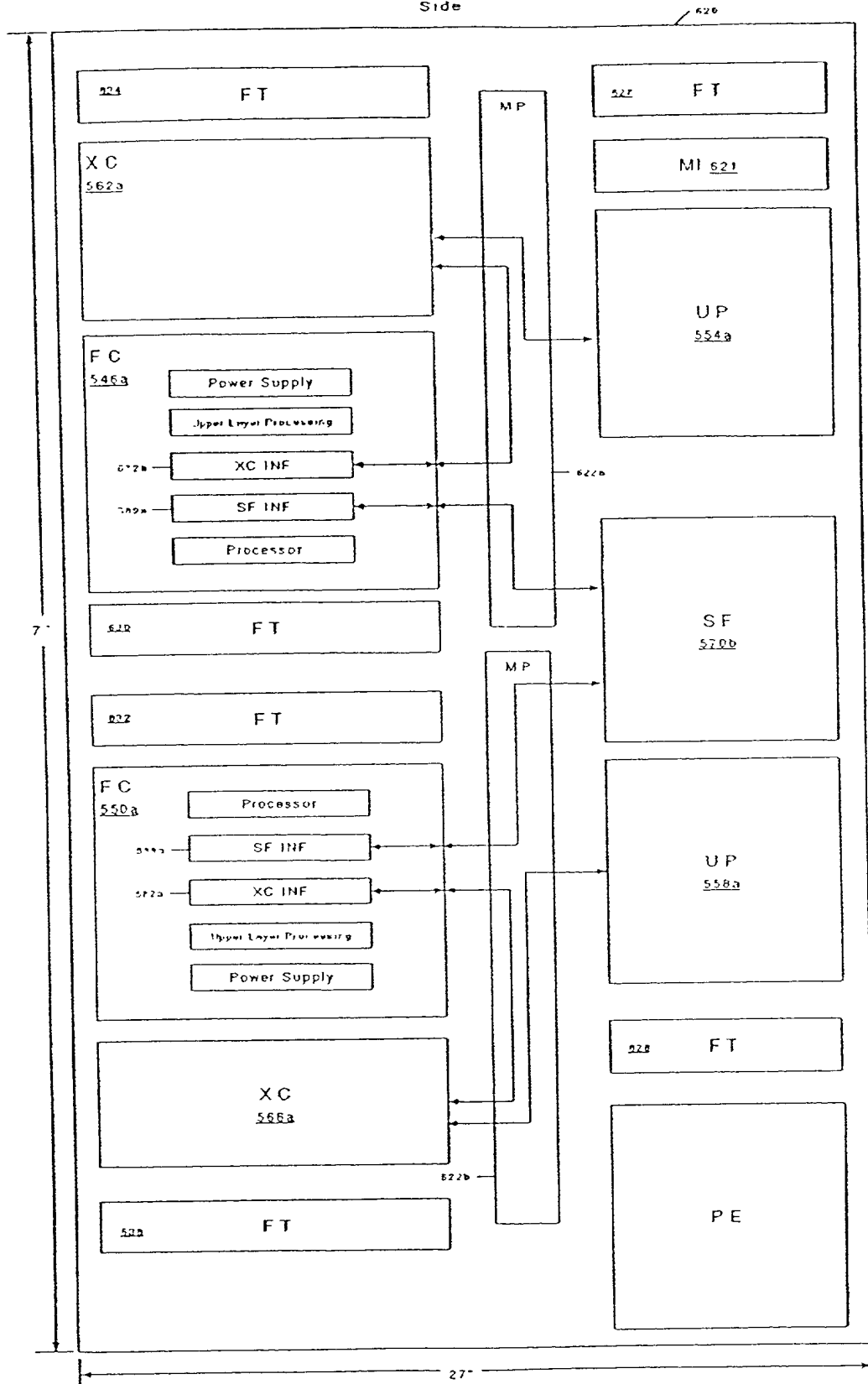
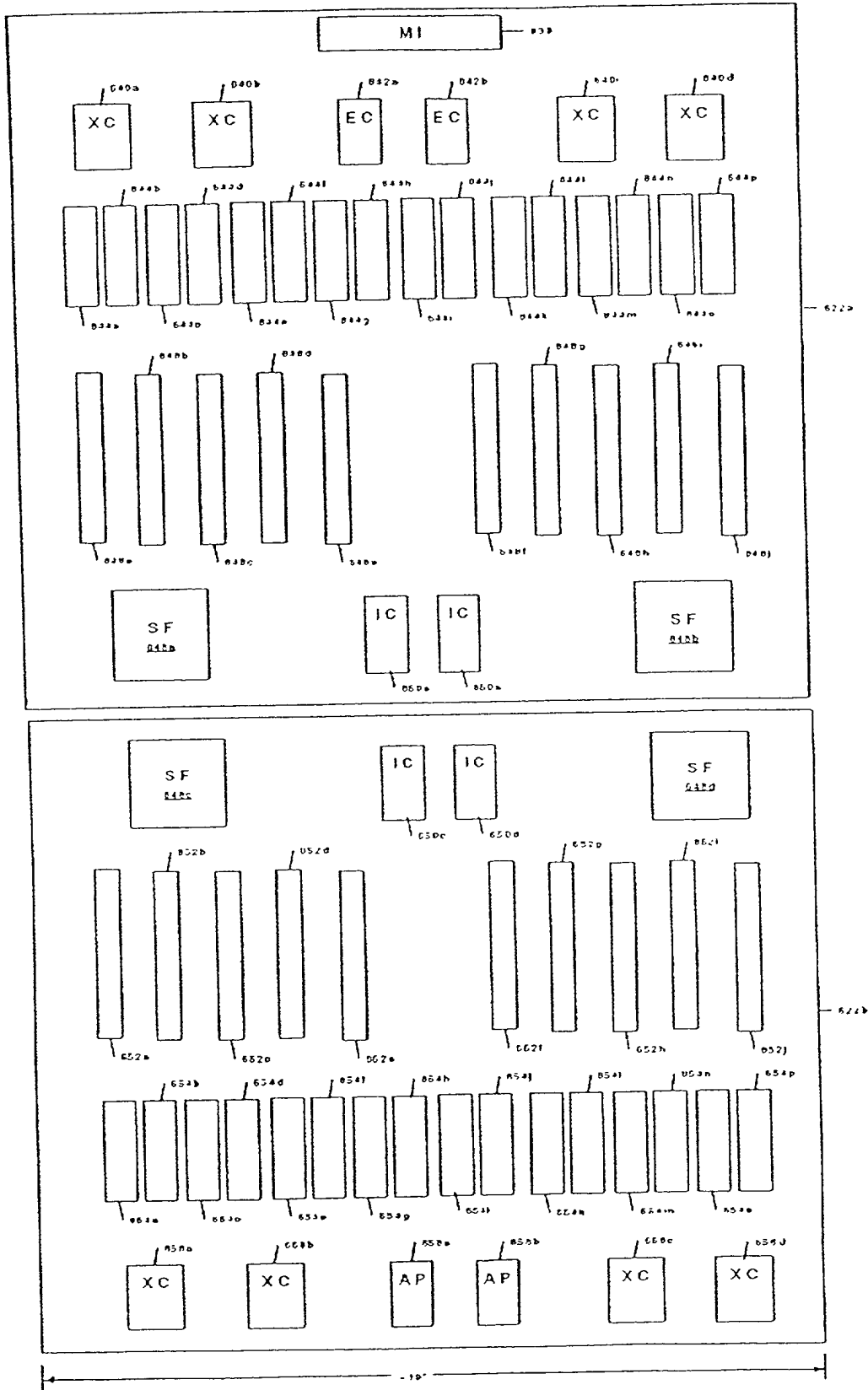
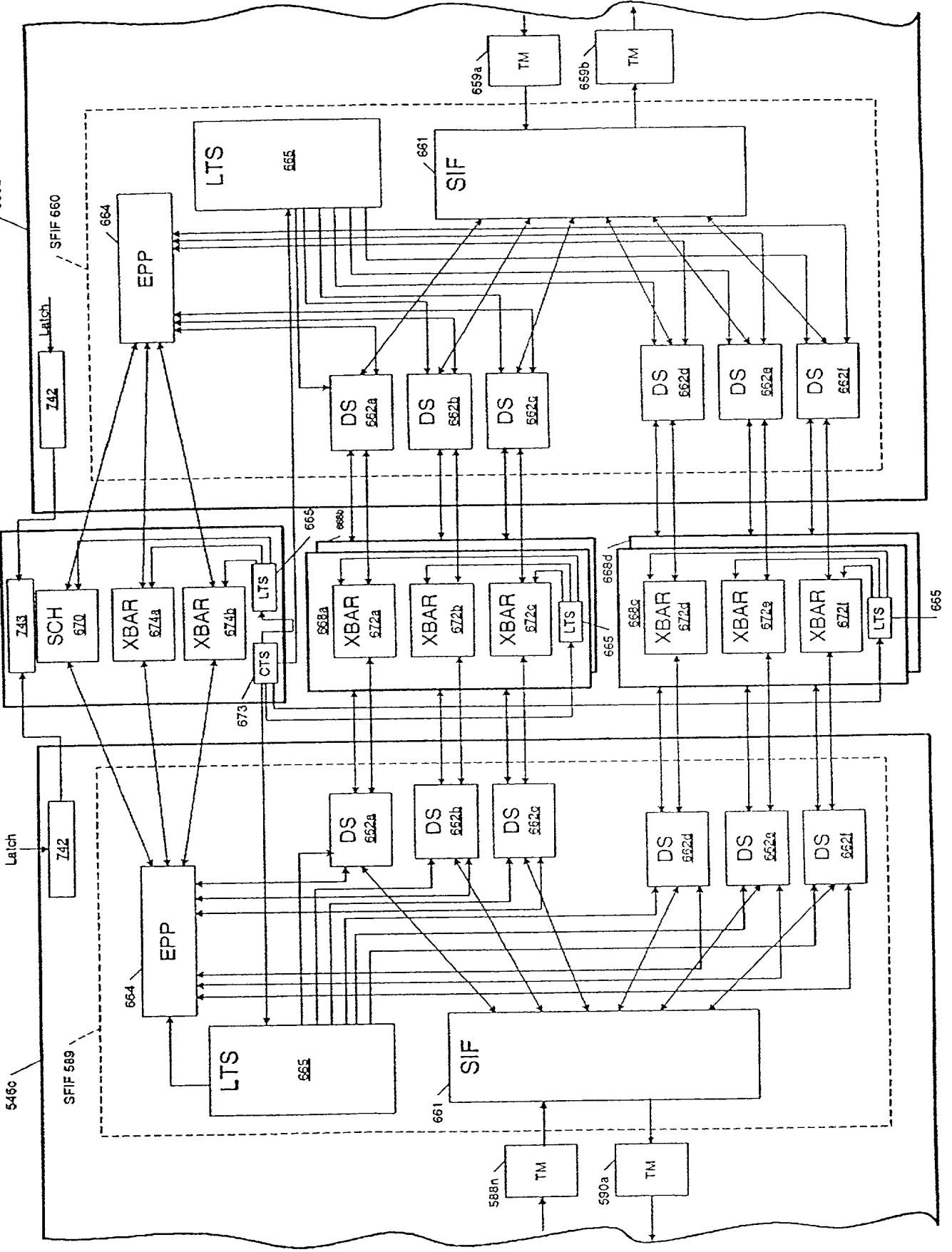


FIG. 42



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FIG. 43



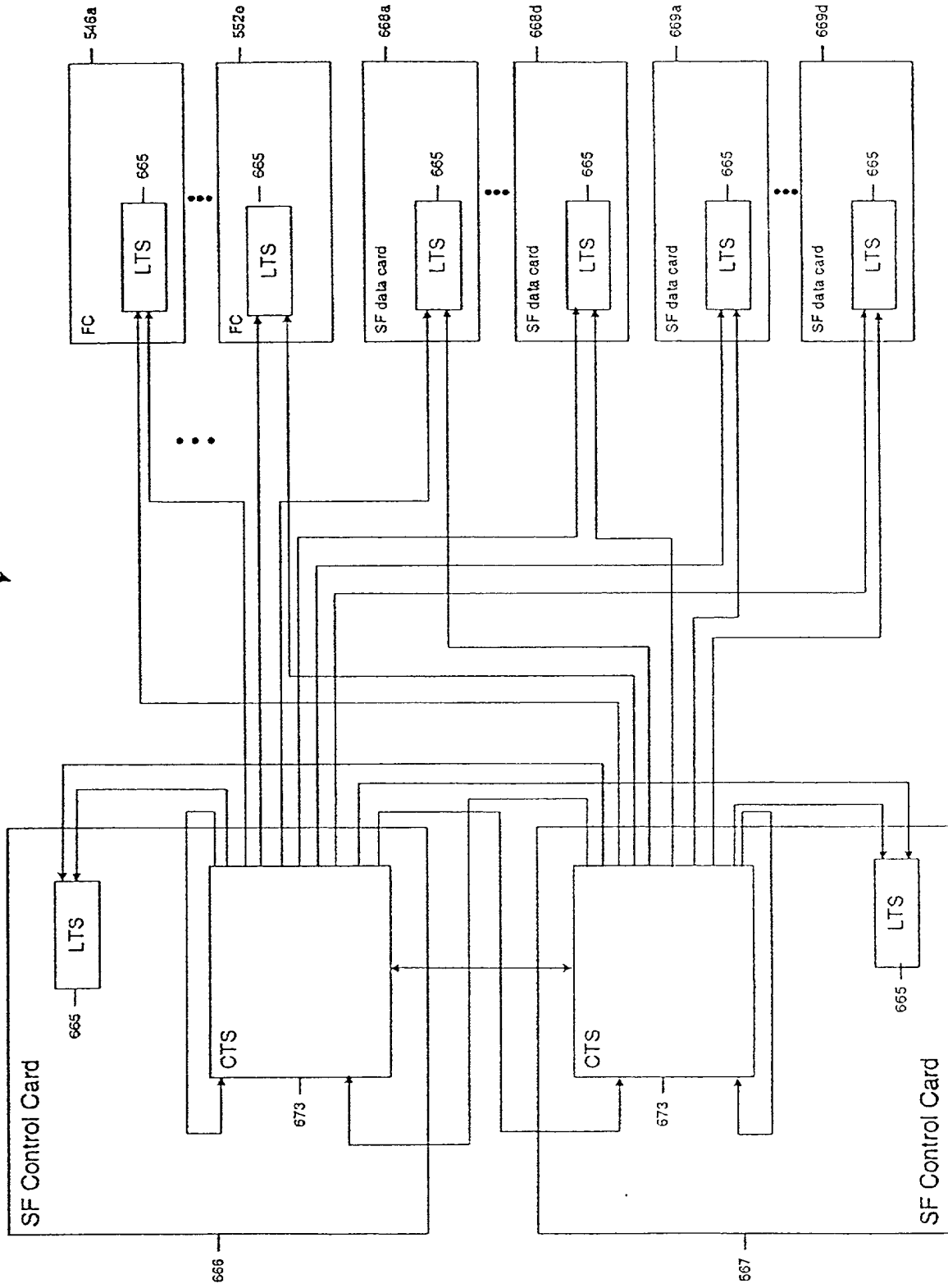


FIG. 44

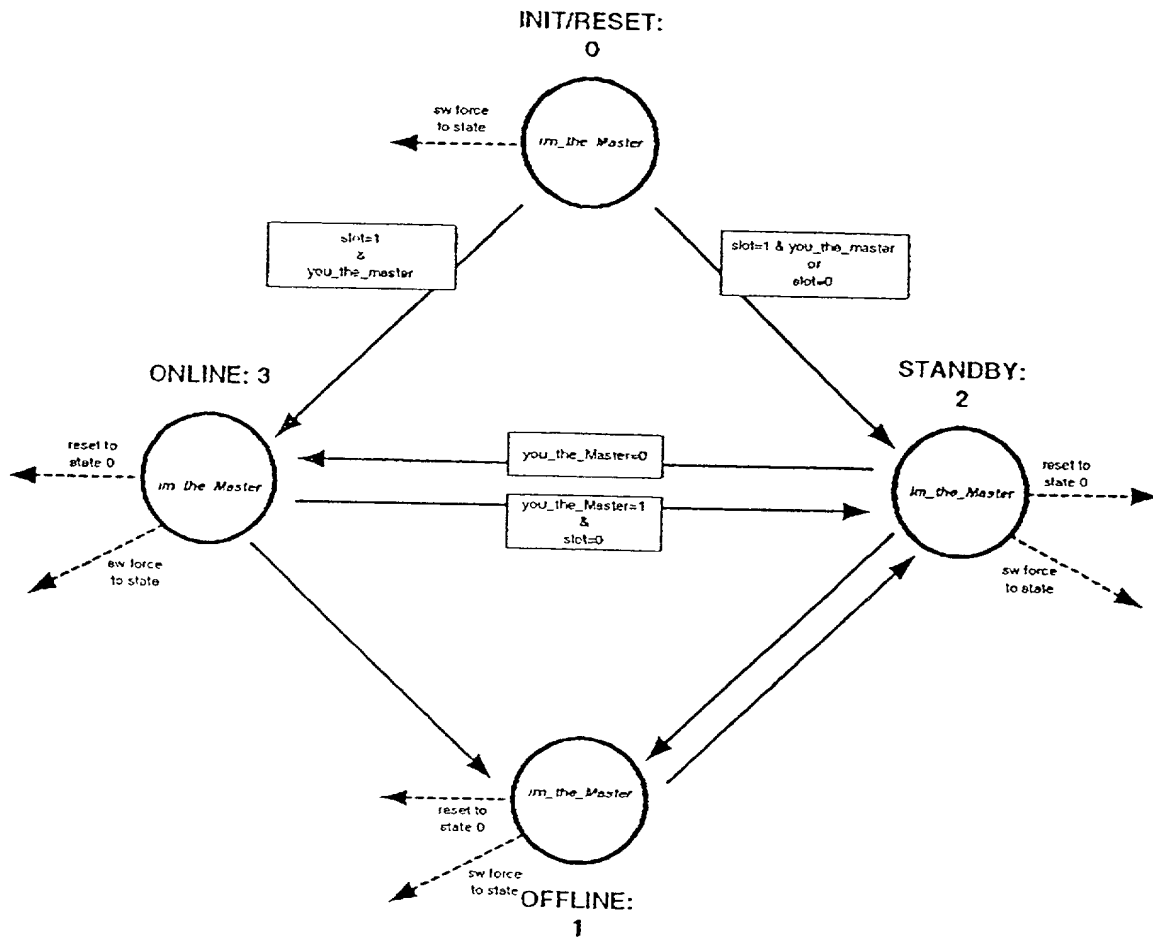


FIG. 46

LTS 665

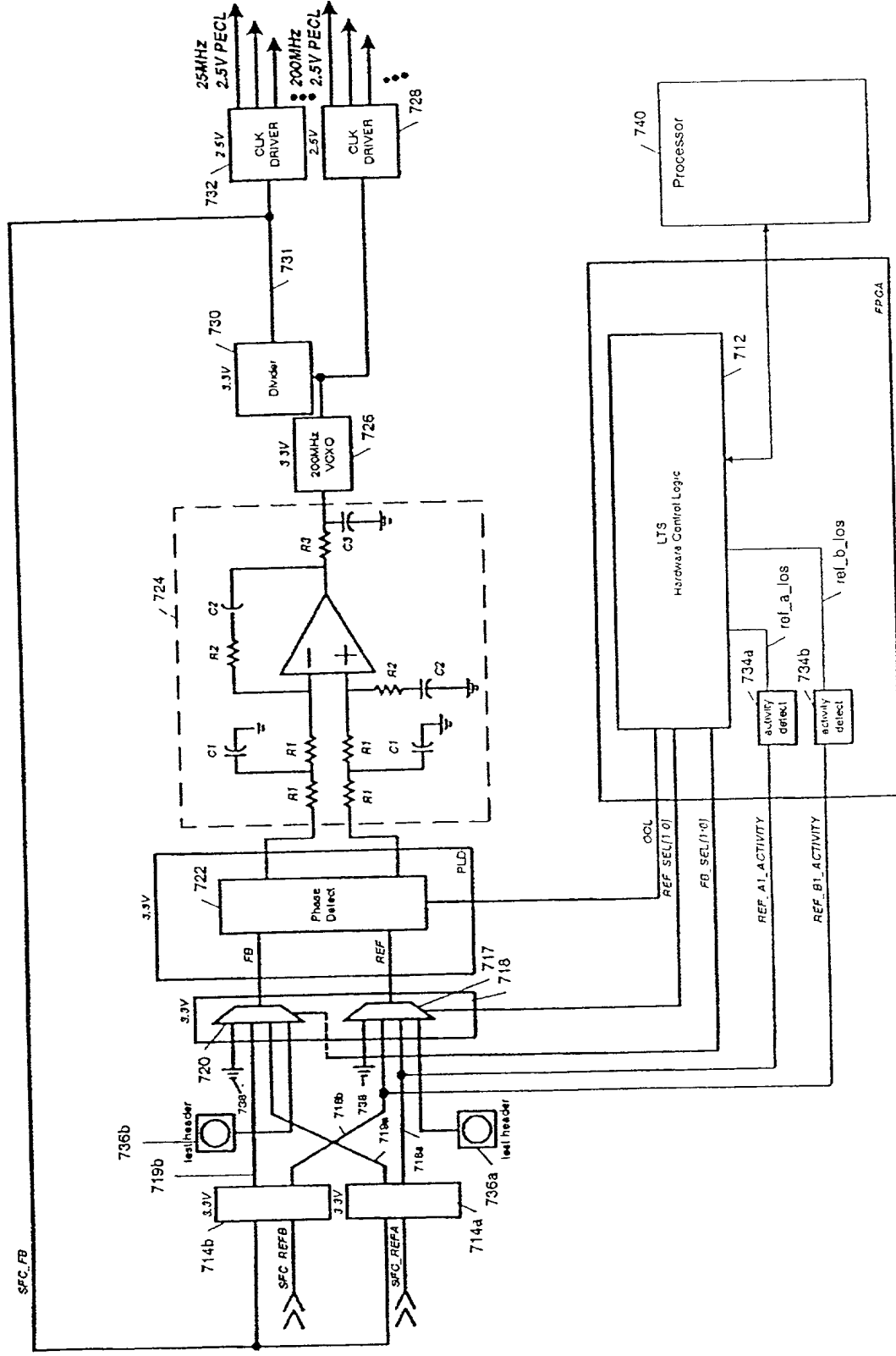


FIG. 47

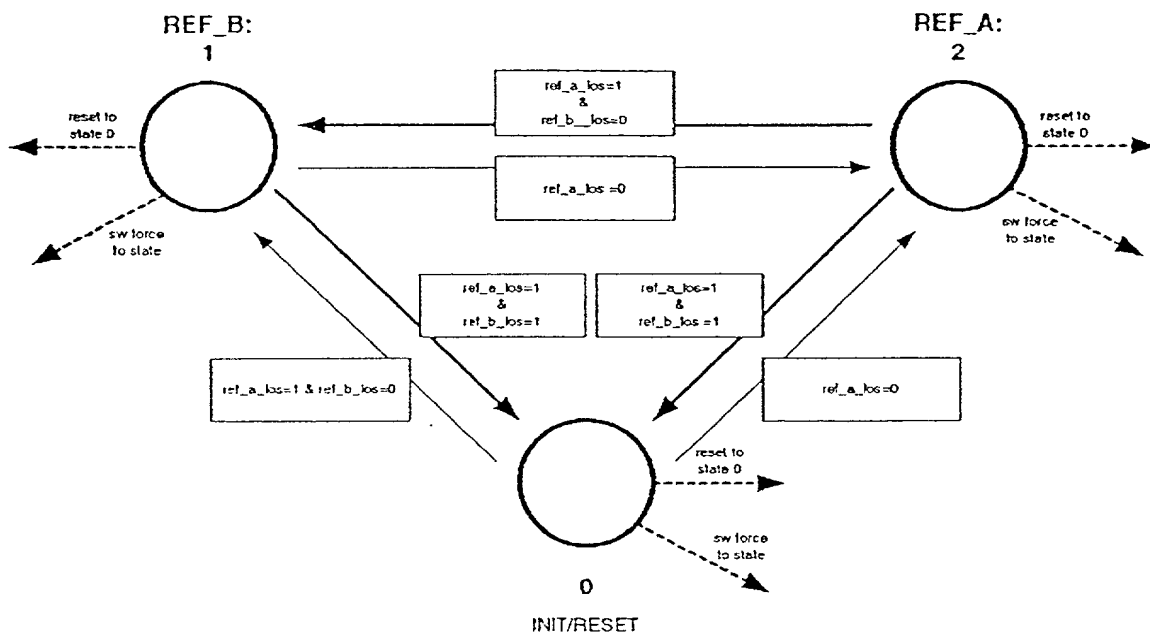


FIG. 48

540

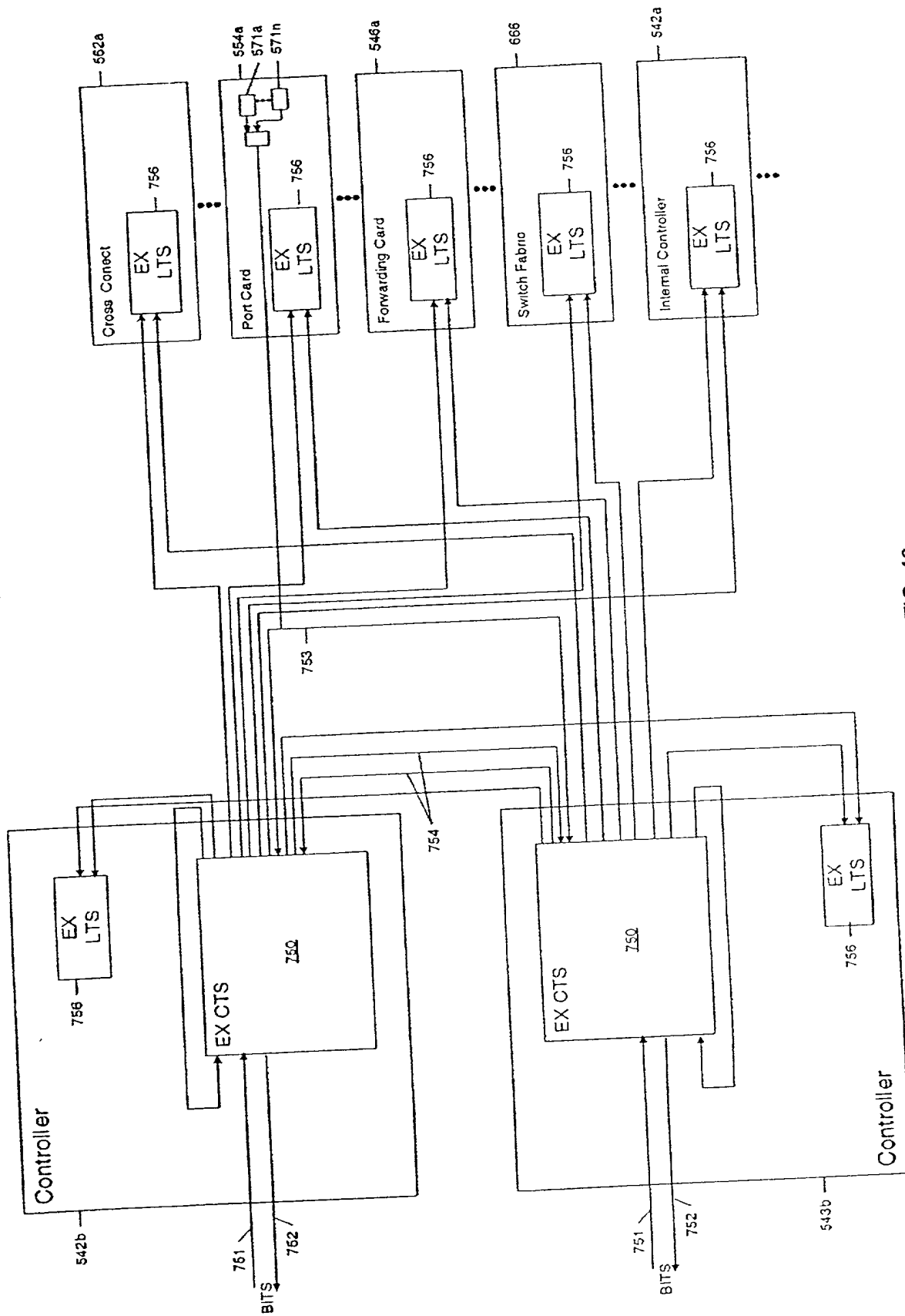
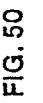


FIG. 49

EX CTS 750



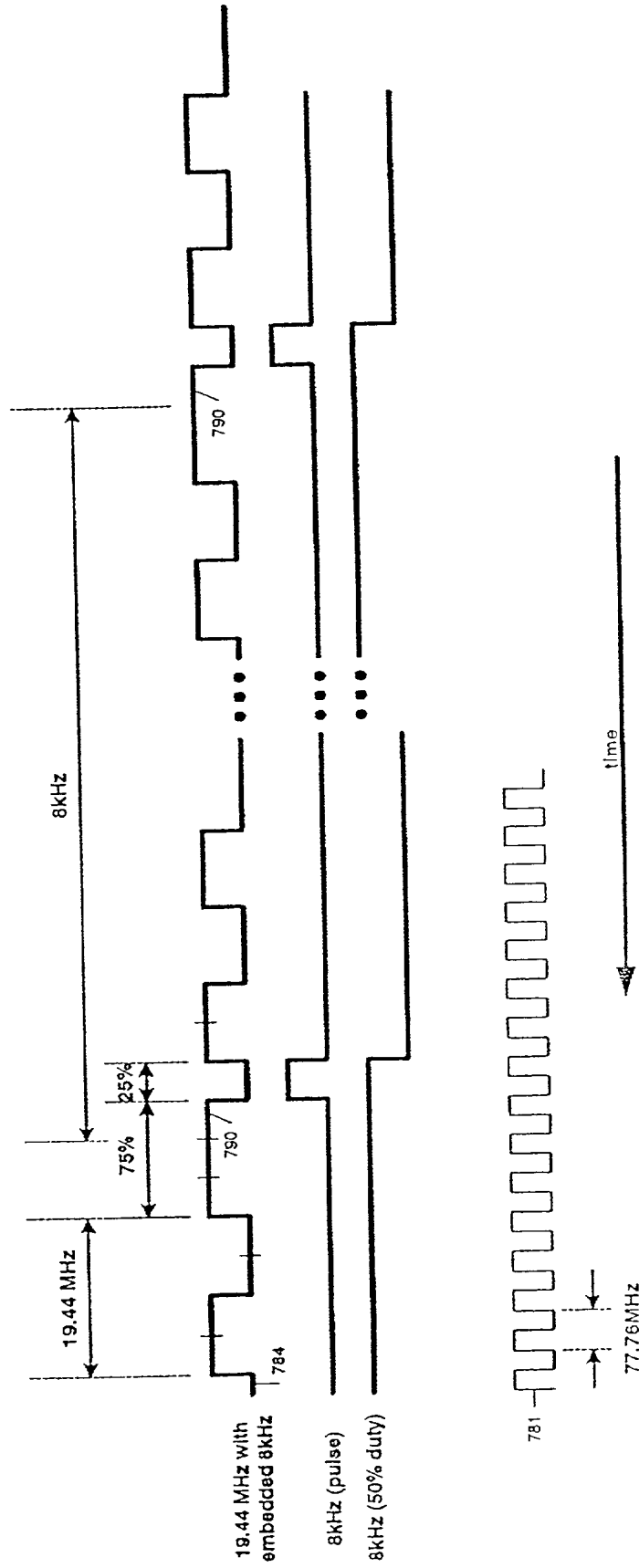


FIG. 51

792

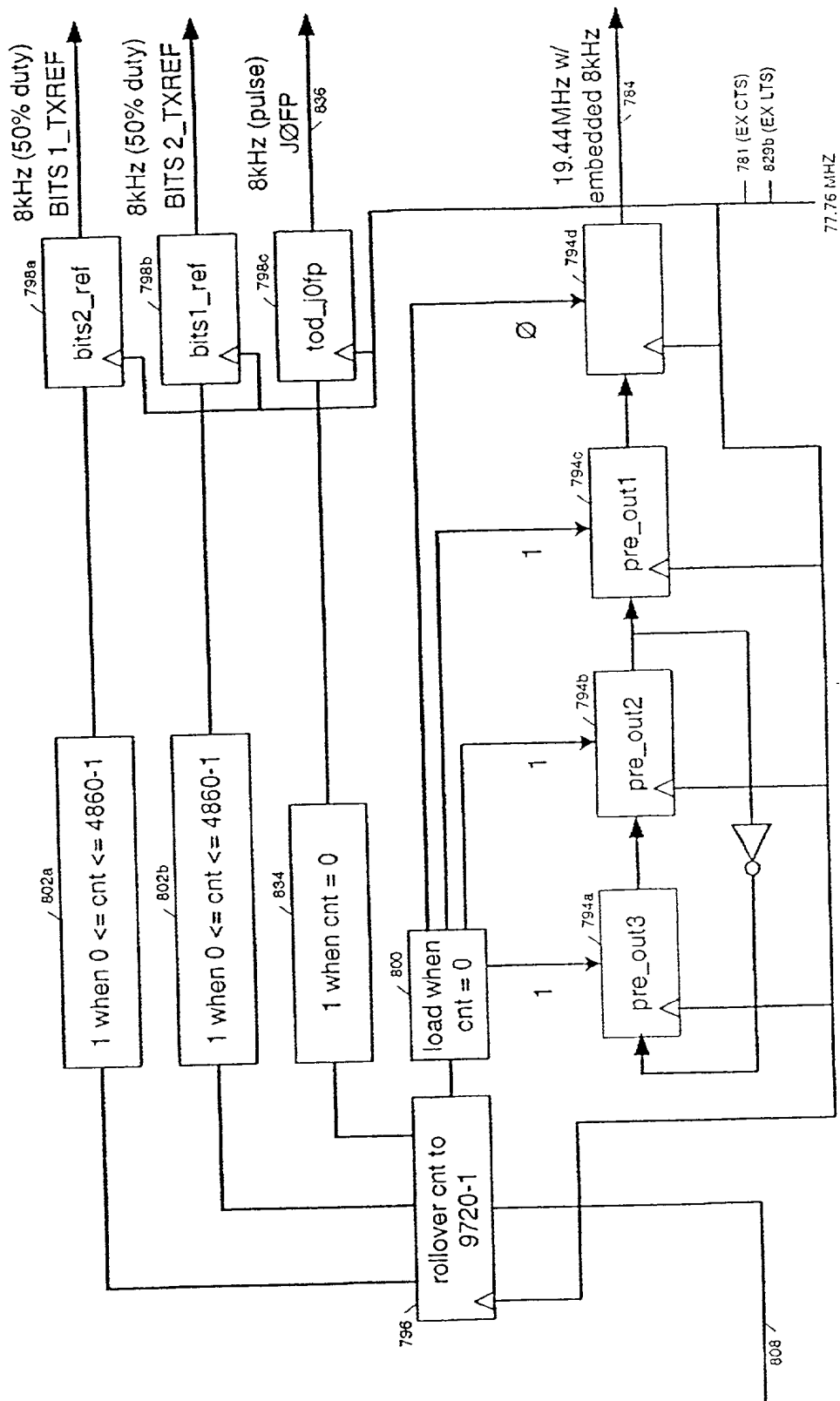
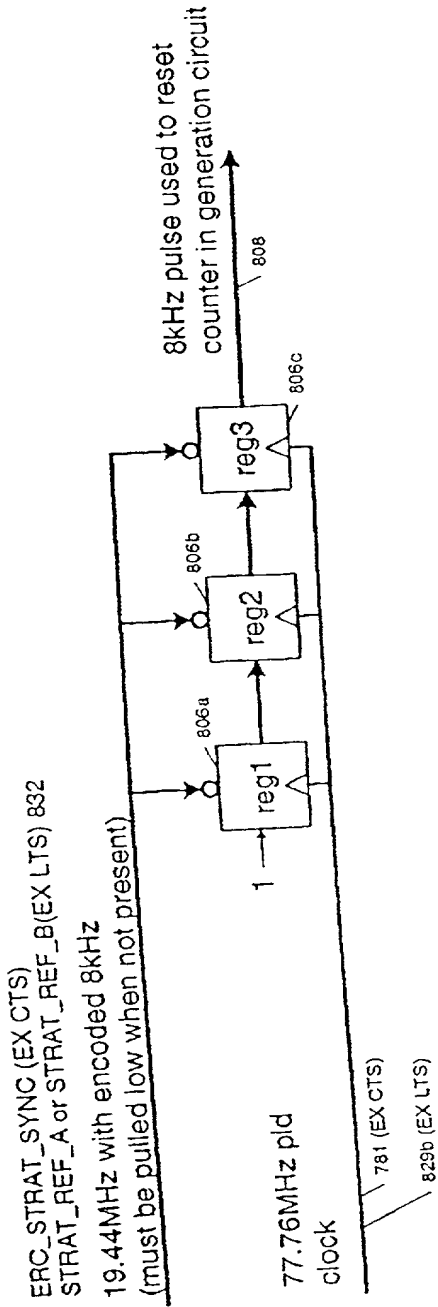


Fig. 52

804



Extractor

FIG. 53

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EX LTS 756

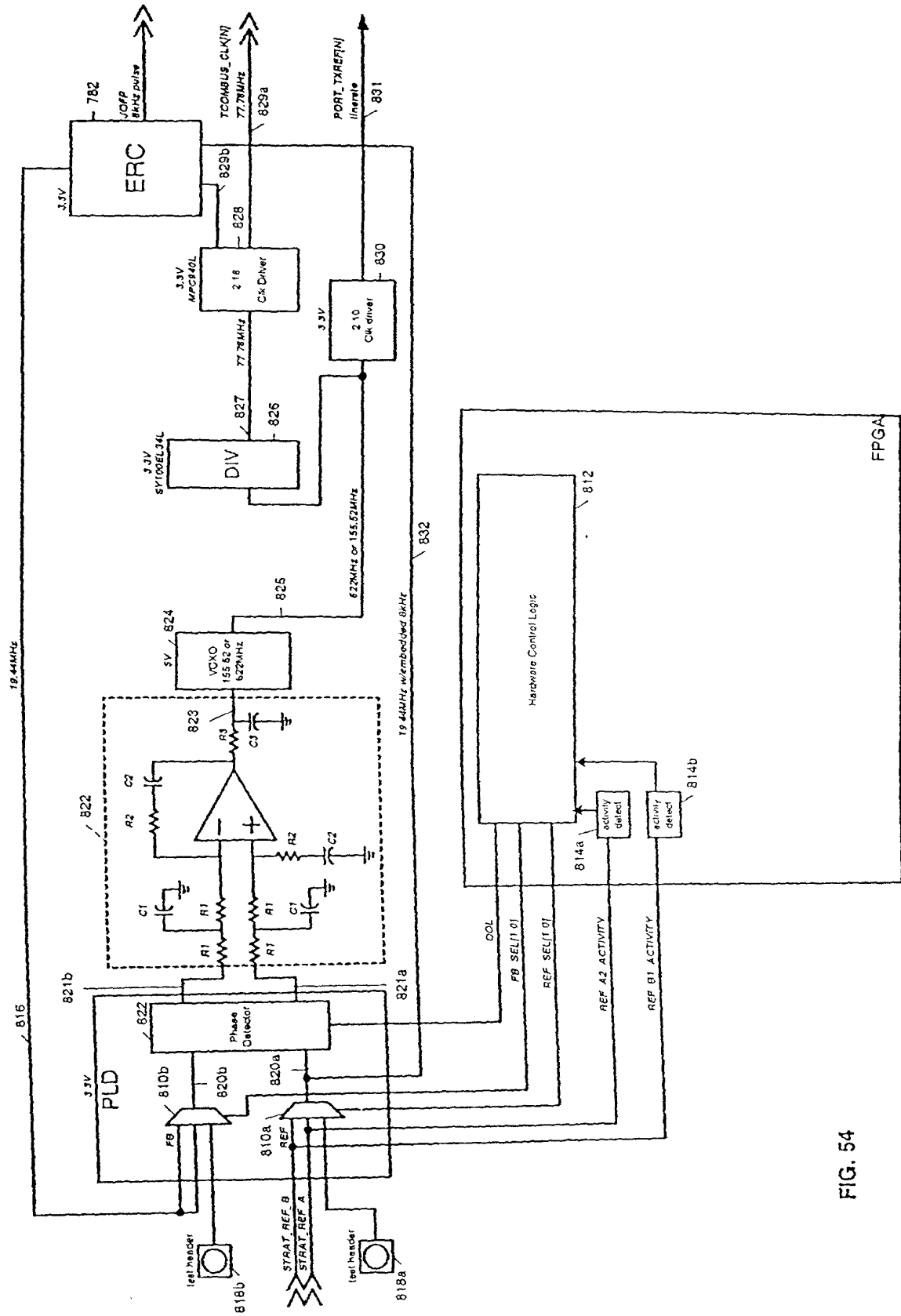


FIG. 54

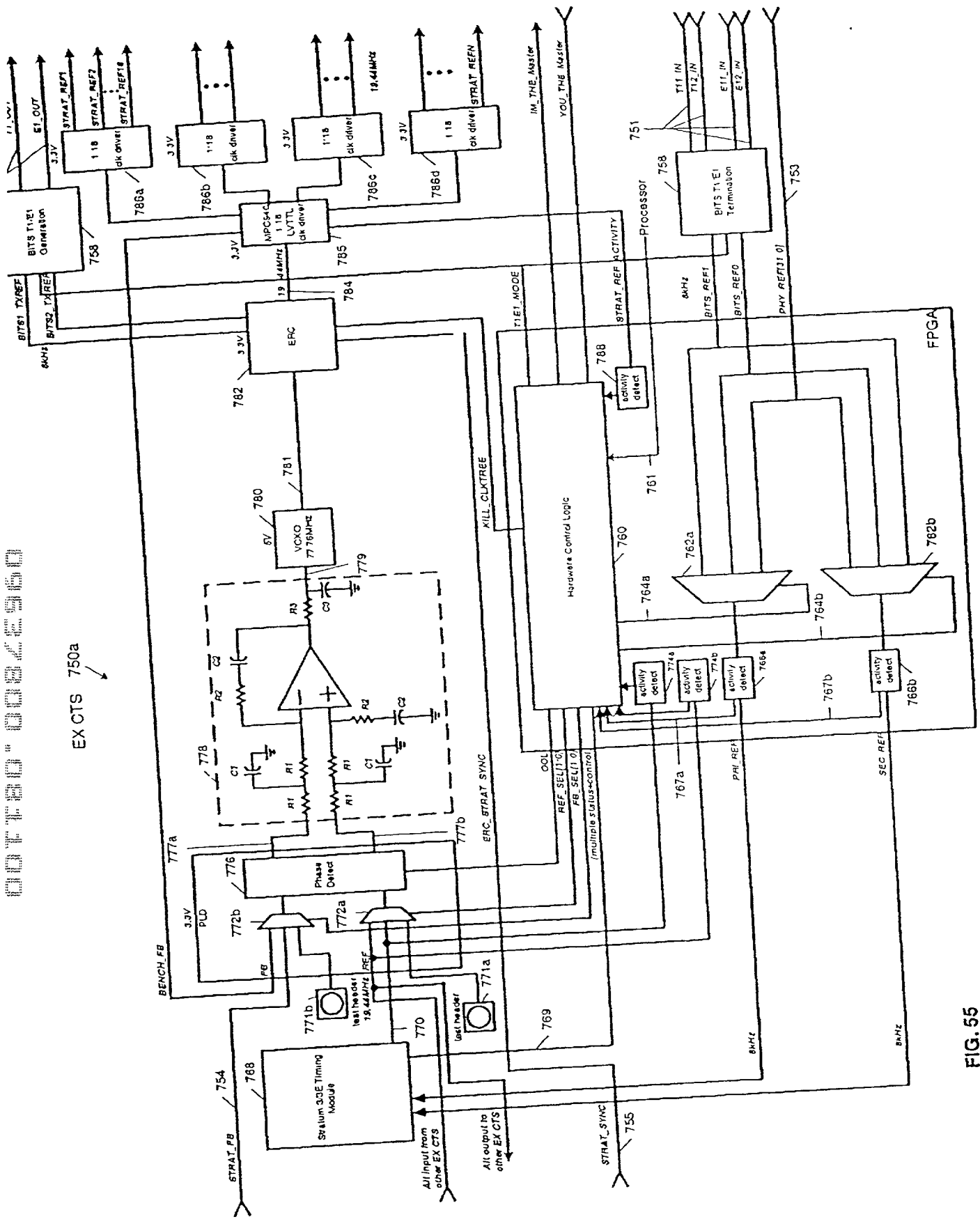


FIG. 55

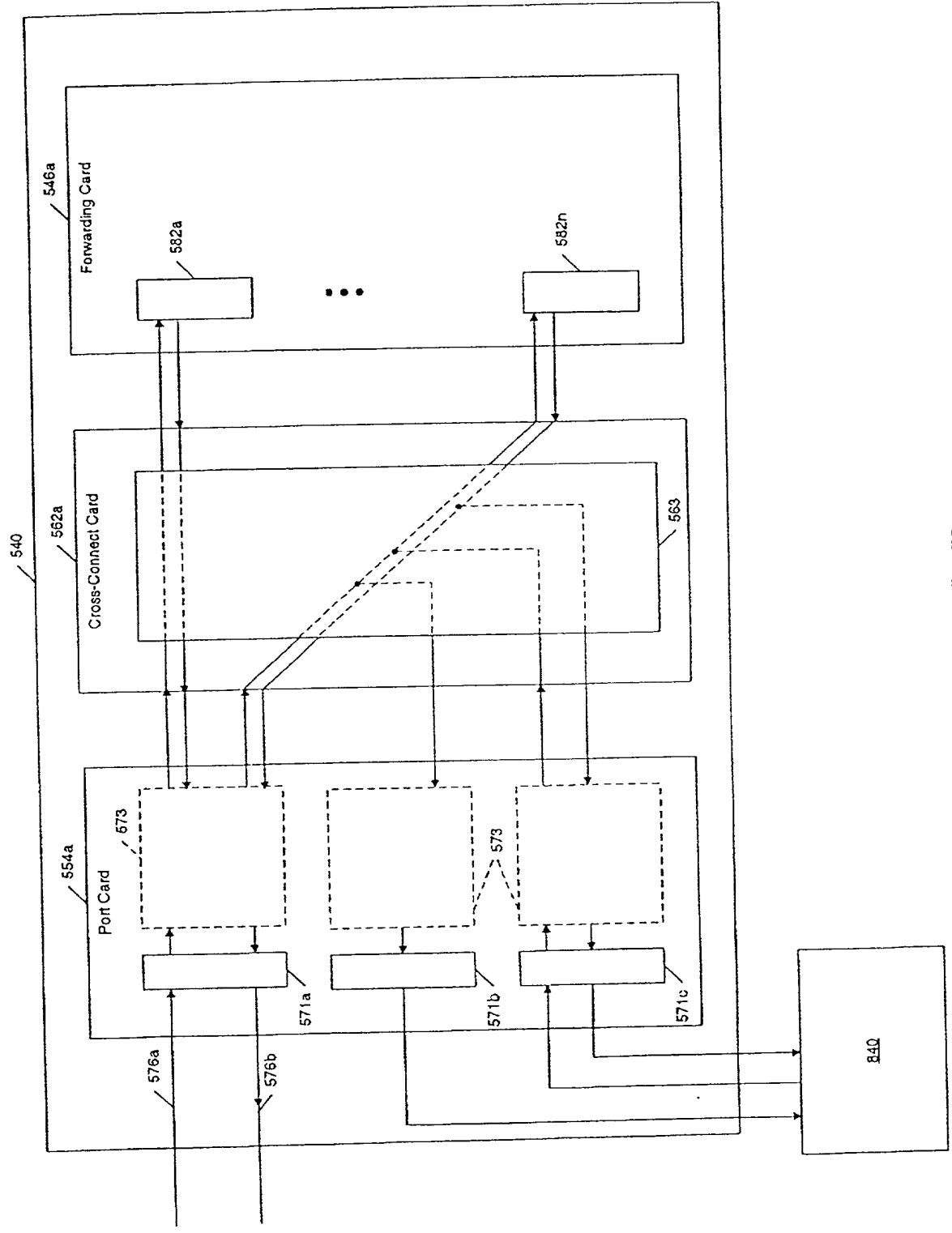


Fig. 56

FIG.57

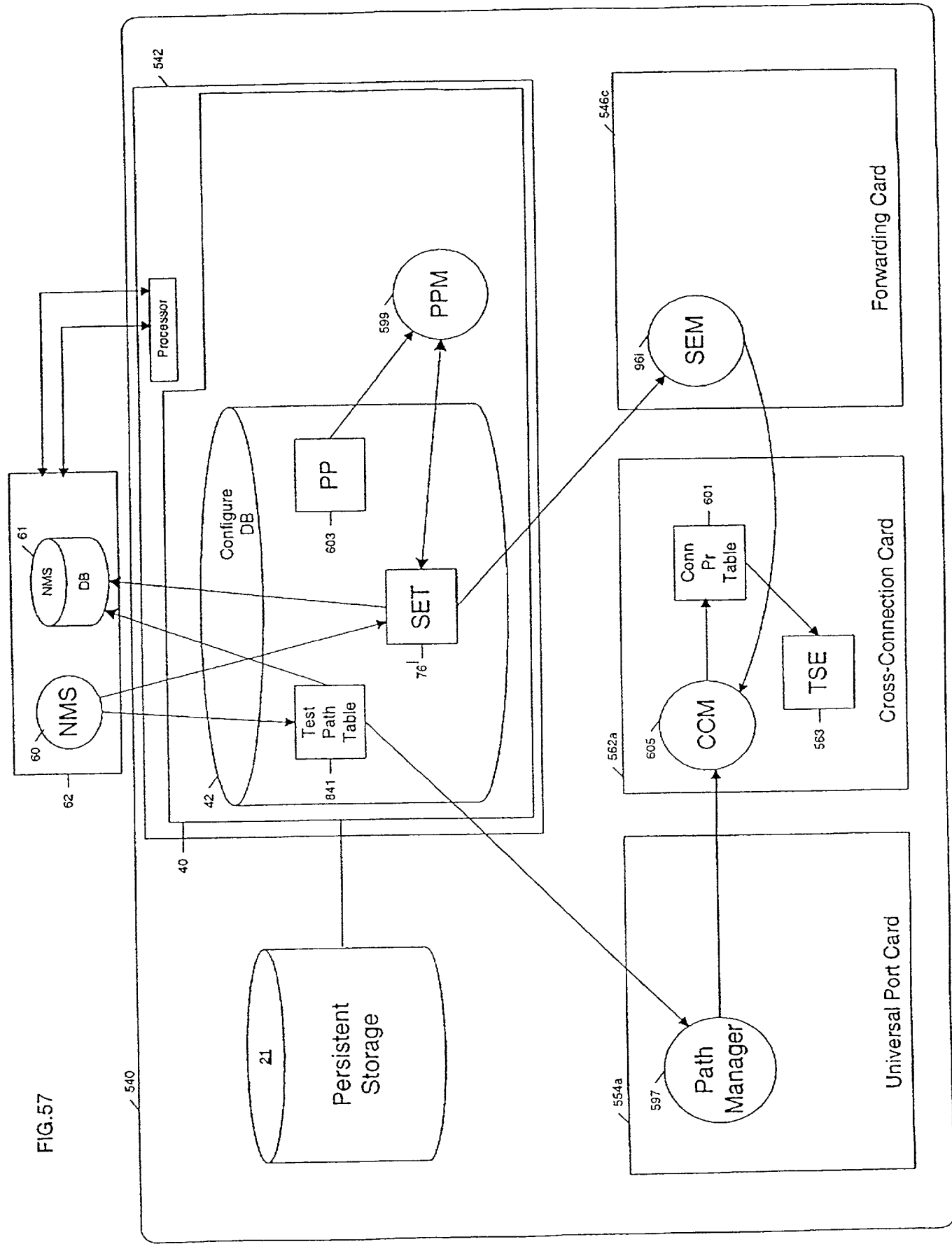


FIG. 58

Test Path Table 841



	842	843	844	844	845	
	Path LID	UP Port LID	Time Slot	# of Time Slots	Monitor	Enable Port Receiver
	1666	1232	4	3	Ingress	No
	1666	1233	4	3	Egress	No
	1666	1233	4	3	Ingress	Yes
	•	•	•	•		•
	•	•	•	•		•

EXPRESS MAILING LABEL NO.: EL327514461US

Attorney Docket No.: 102689-45/00-U0076

**DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR
UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT APPLICATION**

As a below-named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post-office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

Processing Network Management Data In Accordance With Metadata Files

the specification of which

(check one)

☒ is attached hereto.

☐ was filed on

as Application No.:

and was amended on:
(if applicable).

In the event that the filing date and/or Application No. are not entered above at the time I execute this document, and if such information is deemed necessary, I hereby authorize and request my attorneys/agent(s) at Nutter, McClennen & Fish, LLP, One International Place, Boston, MA 02110-2699, to insert above the filing date and/or Application No. of said application.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified application specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment specifically referred to herein.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose all information known to me that is material to patentability in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56.

001130:0002E960

FOREIGN PRIORITY CLAIM

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code §119(a)-(d) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

(check one)

- ☒ no such foreign applications have been filed.
- ☐ such foreign applications have been filed as follows:

**EARLIEST FOREIGN APPLICATION(S), IF ANY FILED WITHIN 12 MONTHS
(6 MONTHS FOR DESIGN) PRIOR TO THIS U.S. APPLICATION**

Country	Application Number	Date of Filing (month, day, year)	Priority Claimed Under 35 USC 119
			___ Yes No ___
			___ Yes No ___
			___ Yes No ___
			___ Yes No ___
			___ Yes No ___

**ALL FOREIGN APPLICATION(S), IF ANY FILED MORE THAN 12 MONTHS
(6 MONTHS FOR DESIGN) PRIOR TO THIS U.S. APPLICATION**

007F80" 0022E250

CLAIM FOR BENEFIT OF EARLIER U.S. PROVISIONAL APPLICATION(s)

I hereby claim priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code §119(e), of any United States provisional patent application(s) listed below:

(check one)

- ☒ no such U.S. provisional applications have been filed.
- ☐ such U.S. provisional applications have been filed as follows:

Application Number	Date of Filing (month, day, year)	Priority Claimed Under 35 USC 119(e)
		___ Yes No ___
		___ Yes No ___
		___ Yes No ___

CLAIM FOR BENEFIT OF EARLIER U.S./PCT APPLICATION(s)

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code §120, of the United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United State Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose all information that is material to patentability in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56, and which became available to me between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

(check one)

- ☐ no such U.S./PCT applications have been filed.
- ☒ such U.S./PCT applications have been filed as follows:

Application Number	Date of Filing (month, day, year)	Status (Patented/Pending/Abandoned)
Integrating Operations Support Services With Network Management Systems	August 7, 2000	Pending

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these

NOTED. 0022250

statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment or both under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

I hereby appoint:

Ronald E. Cahill	Reg. No. 38,403	William C. Geary III	Reg. No. 31,359
Carl M. DeFranco, Jr.	Reg. No. 32,675	Lisa J. Michaud	Reg. No. 44,238
Maria M. Eliseeva	Reg. No. 43,328	Reza Mollaaghababa	Reg. No. 43,810
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Michael I. Falkoff	Reg. No. 30,833	Richard J. Roos	Reg. No. 45,053
		Scott D. Rothenberger	Reg. No. 41,277


all of Nutter McClennen & Fish, LLP, One International Place, Boston, Massachusetts 02110-2699, jointly, and each of them severally, my attorneys at law/patent agent(s), with full power of substitution, delegation and revocation, to prosecute this application, to make alterations and amendments therein, to receive the patent, and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

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P. 08

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Country of Citizenship U.S.	
Post Office Address (required) same as above	

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